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, vol. ii., 128.

STREET WITHOUT.

MEMOIRS

OF

WILLIAM FORSTER.

EDITED BY

BENJAMIN SEEBOHM.

"Of all other things I love to be driven to the Saviour, and to have my need of Him brought home to my soul."

Letter from William Forster to Joseph Sturge, vol. ii., 128.

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LIFE

OF

WILLIAM FORSTER.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA.

RELIGIOUS LABOURS WITHIN THE LIMITS OF PHILADELPHIA, NEW YORK, AND NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETINGS.

During the whole of the year now nearly brought to a close, William Forster had keenly felt his protracted absence from his beloved wife and child. Still he had much work before him in the North; and it was no small trial to his faith not to feel relieved from an apprehension of duty to extend his journey to the Southern States, with the certain prospect of thus being brought into immediate contact with the wretched system of slavery, and of witnessing the sufferings of the poor slaves, as well as of being obliged to seek entertainment at taverns kept by slaveholders. But enabled, under all his conflicts, to put his trust in the Lord, and to cast all his care upon Him, he was strengthened to persevere in the work to which he was called.

Again leaving Philadelphia, he spent some time among the meetings to the west and north of the city.

1823. *12th mo. 25th.*—We left town early, and came to the week-day meeting at Merion, where I was much enlarged, both in feeling and doctrine. I went to my dear friend Israel W. Morris's—well-named, for I think he is as much of a true Israelite as most I have met with in America.

26th. Haverford.—I believe I was watchful to keep near to the gift.

27th. Radnor.—I was exercised for the awakening of the careless, and in testimony against a proud, formal, hypocritical, and pharisaical spirit, which is self-sufficient, and robs Christ of his honour. I trust a word was given me also for those that were tender in spirit.

28th. Our meeting at the Valley was, I believe, owned by the shedding abroad of divine love, and I was enabled to testify to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world.

29th. Charlestown.—A small meeting of Friends, in which I was much enlarged and strengthened faithfully to labour in the gospel in much tenderness of spirit. We were at Pikeland this morning, where I was brought very low under a sense of the power of the adversary; and I have heard enough since meeting to satisfy me that there is cause for all my sorrow. Our dear friend Isaiah Kirk met us, and conducted us to his comfortable habitation a little after sunset. He is a valuable, upright Friend and elder; one that, I trust, is not ashamed to stand by me in these times of trial, unworthy as I feel myself of the unity of faithful friends.

A few days later he writes to his wife:—

1824. *1st mo. 5th. Lampeter, Lancaster Co., Pennsylvania.*—It is a comfort, and greatly to my strength and support, to find thou art so much assisted to give me up to the disposal of our Lord and Saviour, until the portion of suffering He may be pleased to appoint me in this land is

completely filled up. Many are my sorrows and discouragements, almost from day to day, wherever I go. But the belief that it is for an appointed time—that the day of release will come, and that at last I shall be restored to thee with quietness of mind,—enables me to endure, with meekness and patience, sometimes even with a fortitude that is beyond myself, the sufferings and privations of my present lot, and sometimes constrains me, with an increase of resignation, to offer up myself to the service of the Lord, even if He should see meet to lay upon me, to the extent of my original prospect, the visiting of the Southern States. I am generally preserved from much anxiety respecting it, in the hope and confidence that, as the time approaches, my way will be opened with satisfactory clearness.

On the first day of the year, we were at meeting at Nantmel. The appearance of the young people, as in many other places, was discouraging. I laboured among them under some apprehension of duty; but I had not much feeling of relief. I attended the week-day meeting at Uwchlan: I thought access was granted to the presence of the Lord, and I trust it is not too much to say that there was some feeling of a holy solemnity over the meeting, whilst I was engaged in supplication.

We came afterwards to our friend Nathan Sharples's, at Downingtown. Our meeting next day was attended by many besides Friends. I was brought very low, and sought to retire into a state of humble, watchful dependence before the Lord; and in the riches of his love I was strengthened to labour, to my own encouragement. We were kindly and hospitably entertained at our friend Jane Stalker's at East Calne that evening. I had lodged there nearly three years ago, and was not displeased to find they were willing to recognise me as an old friend; it was a truly comfortable and rather indulgent home.

The meeting at East Calne was large. I sought to retire to the place of deep inward waiting, but could not immediately attain to that gathered and quiet state I so much desired. At length I was brought under some feeling of

solemnity, and was favoured with more clearness of feeling and strength of utterance than on some occasions, being fervently engaged for the awakening and gathering of the careless, the traditional, and the speculative professor.

We were at the meeting at Fallowfield yesterday. It was large. I was much engaged. I warned Friends to beware that they did not rest in conviction for sin, or in an apprehended knowledge of the Truth, but that they should come to Him who could save them from sin, that they might be established in the power of God, and partake of the consolations of the gospel; earnestly seeking to press the consideration whether there was a real desire for deliverance, a hunger and thirst after righteousness. It was in a line of close searching labour; but that is much my path of duty wherever I go. My simple, plain preaching does not suit the speculative disposition of many in these parts. But whilst, through the mercy of the Lord, I am preserved in the doctrine of the Apostles, I trust I shall not be forsaken of Him who was their shield.

On our way to this place to-day, we dined at old Robert Moore's. He and his dear valuable wife are of the old stock of Pennsylvania Quakers,—plain, honest-hearted, country friends, full of love and hospitality; and I feel it a comfort to be with them, enjoying the fatness of the earth, and surrounded by the comforts of life in a plain way. I had been at their house before, and they did not seem to regard me as a stranger.

Pennsylvania and Jersey were two of my principal objects in coming to America; and it is somewhat of a confirmation, that notwithstanding the trials of the times, which are beyond description in some places, I feel myself quite as much in my rightly appointed allotment as at any time since I left home.

With reference to the subject of slavery and the Bible Society, both so near his heart, he adds the following interesting remarks:—

Almost from the first of my coming into America, I have wished to obtain a brief summary of the laws in all the

different States relating to slaves and free people of colour. A few Friends in Philadelphia are now interested in the object, and I hope it will ultimately be accomplished, though it must be a work of considerable time, of no small labour, and probably of some expense. I know of nothing that would be so likely to rouse the feelings of the people of the eastern and middle States into action, as having these oppressive statutes brought before them by such a compendium. I have not quite finished reading the debate in Parliament on Fowell's motion, having had it only a few days. It is unquestionably the most interesting and important document that has appeared upon the subject of slavery. I think it might be of incalculable service in this country, and could be glad if I had dozens of them. I think it would not be long before they were distributed far and wide. I would endeavour to get a copy into the hands of every Governor of the States to the southward of the Chesapeake, and, if it were possible, into the hands of every member of each of the State legislatures.

Fowell's speech contains so much convincing argument, and presents the question of slavery in such a new and forcible point of view, and all in such good temper, that, could it be brought before the influential part of the community in the slaveholding States, it might answer a very good purpose; and being made on subjects connected with the British Colonies, be full as likely to be read as if it had proceeded from an American citizen. If it were printed in columns, it might be sent for two cents to Missouri, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, &c. I wonder whether he would consent to it. Some of William Smith's remarks are excellent. It should be remembered that many of the slaveholders are people of very limited intercourse, and some of them have perhaps hardly ever been in the way of hearing the iniquity and abominations of slavery exposed. And it seems no more than common justice, whilst they are laden with heavy censure for evils entailed on them by the avarice and luxury of their fathers, that we should endeavour, by every possible means, to enlighten and enlarge their minds, and lead them to a patient investigation of the righteousness of the claim they profess to

have on the persons of their fellow-creatures. My heart and mind are much in the subject, and I think that no object of a benevolent nature ever had so much hold on my feelings; though I must confess it does not supplant my interest in the Bible Society, which I consider the secret spring of every other institution of a philanthropic nature. It is those amiable and excellent men who have devoted themselves to that most noble cause that are the first to stand forward in promoting every other institution which has for its object the amelioration of man, of whatever clime or colour.

2nd mo. 6th.—On Fourth and Fifth-day I was at the Quarterly Meeting at Abington. It was very fearful in prospect; but in the Select Meeting, and in a visit I paid to the women's meeting, I found some strength to labour against that wasteful spirit, with the feeling of which I am at times almost overborne. I could feel that there were many to whom my communications were not acceptable; but I had enough outward evidence to satisfy me that the few who I believe to be standing on the true foundation were in unity with my exercises. I had felt it laid on me for some time to propose a meeting for such of the young people of that Quarterly Meeting as could be collected within a morning's ride. It was mentioned in the Meeting of Ministers and Elders, and received as much encouragement as I could have expected, and it was appointed to be held yesterday afternoon. I thought it a very large meeting. I was much engaged; and I trust that, in the aboundings of heavenly mercy, it may have proved a time of encouragement to some, and of awakening and invitation to others. I have felt somewhat cast down since, but I dare not call it in question. But I find it very hard to bear the trial of feeling and knowing that there are those, even friends of long standing and considerable influence, who are opposed to me in my religious labours; because I dare not but preach the Lord Jesus as the Saviour of the world, and testify against that cavilling and contentious spirit, in which many are tempted to call in question the fundamental truths of the gospel. I have believed myself called upon to declare it again and again, that as no man can say that Jesus

is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost, so under the influence of the Spirit of Christ no man can deny that Jesus is the Lord; nor can we believe that the Spirit of Truth ever did, or ever will, lead the disciple of Christ to undervalue what He has done and suffered for us. It is often the exercise of my mind —may I not say my prayer?—that I may be preserved in a meek, watchful, and forbearing spirit. Many are my fears lest I should stumble, and the blessed cause should suffer. Friends at home can scarcely form an adequate conception of my conflicts and sorrows. At times my distress is so great, that it preys upon my health, and I wonder that I am not utterly overwhelmed. Surely it is of the Lord's mercies and his great condescension that I am still spared!

William Forster again returned to the city in the early part of Second Month, and was for some time engaged in Christian labour among Friends there.

2nd mo. 19th. Philadelphia.—I have had heavy, laborious service to-day, in two meetings. Meetings in these large meeting-houses break me down. My difficulty of utterance is still a very trying humiliation. It is impossible to describe the conflict in which I have at times been involved from this discouragement. For a while it seemed to shake my faith to the centre. When almost overborne by the burthen of the work in large meetings, my voice has suddenly failed me, perhaps in the midst of a sentence, and I have stood unable to articulate a word, and unable to speak louder than to be heard by those immediately around me. Surely I ought to be very thankful that my utterance is so far improved, and seek to become more entirely devoted to the Lord and to his service. But all other trials, heavy as they would seem if there were no other, are light compared with the perils from false brethren, which seem to await me almost in every place. Many are departed from the faith; and there seems no entrance for a word, even when the love and power is felt

most sensibly to prevail. But what can we expect whilst they continue to treat with lightness the sufferings of the Redeemer, and the purpose for which He delivered Himself up to death.

It has been very affecting to me to hear, by a kind letter from my dear brother Robert, of my dear mother's accident. I never feel my absence more acutely than on hearing accounts of health calculated to awaken my anxiety. But she is most patient and tranquil in times of affliction. How earnestly do I long to see her!

Again leaving the city, he went into the limits of one of the Northern Quarterly Meetings.

26th. Bucks County.—I cannot say how much I feel on account of some who, I cannot doubt, are both the called and devoted of the Lord; that they may patiently endure every baptism, and come forth in that simplicity, and clearness, and power that will carry an evidence with it that the work is the Lord's. Yesterday and to-day we have been attending the Quarterly Meeting for Bucks County, at Wrightstown. It was very large; there was some appearance of that spirit which is so sore a trouble to the church in many places at the present day. I never before thought myself called upon to stand so conspicuously in the breach. Through the Lord's blessing, Friends were enabled, in the authority of Truth, to stand against this spirit of innovation; so that I could have broken forth in praise to His great and worthy name. I wish to remember the meeting with humble, reverent gratitude. I felt, for the moment, more than is usual with me, raised above the fear of man, particularly in bearing testimony against that restless spirit which despises authority, and would disturb the peace and order of the Church. I was enabled to use much plainness of speech, both in the meeting for worship and afterwards, upon different subjects, in the meeting for discipline, especially in regard to the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and the evil and danger of a cavilling, disputatious spirit. I think I was sensible of the

help of the spirits of faithful friends; and I am glad to feel some capacity to sympathize with them in their many and deep tribulations.

From Bucks County he passed over into New Jersey.

3rd mo. 13th. Upper Springfield, New Jersey.—I had for many months felt much attracted towards a meeting for the people at Trenton, and it seeming to come in our way I gave up to have it appointed for last evening. It was held in Friends' Meeting-house; the number of Friends' families is but small, and they are with but little exception deeply tinctured with this ranting spirit. But after some serious conflict I ventured on my feet, and my way was opened to speak on the solemnity of divine worship, and the quietness becoming the occasion;—on the need of a right subjection of will;—on the seriousness of the engagement, and the necessity of renewed influences of divine love for the work of the ministry;—on the authority of the church to judge of the qualification of those who come forward professedly in support of the cause of Christ. And I thought I had power given me to preach the gospel of Christ as the means provided in the love and mercy of God for the salvation of his believing and penitent children; and to bear my testimony, in clear and unequivocal language, to the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and the great blessing we enjoy in possessing the sacred volume.

Again he writes from the city, respecting his various engagements:—

3rd mo. 18th. Philadelphia.—I am rather more than usually borne down in spirit; but still I humbly trust I am not cast off by my Lord and Redeemer. It is a day of treading down and rebuke and blasphemy, and the longer I stay in this part of the country the more I feel it to be so. Infidelity is stalking abroad with a bold and fearless front. My heart is

indeed very sad; but it is a day in which one would dread that state of insensibility in which one could not be brought deeply to suffer under a sense of these things.

19th.—I have a truly interesting letter from my dear brother Josiah. It has awakened much feeling on account of my tenderly beloved mother in considering her weak and suffering state. I feel much at the thought of her sight being impaired; but if her health is but restored it will indeed be a great favour. I cannot doubt her being a meek and patient sufferer. Dear creature! what a privilege it would be to be with her. I wish to consider it a favour I did not receive that letter till I had accounts of her being so far on the way to recovery.

30th.—I was glad to be at the Meeting for Sufferings, not only for the sake of the opportunity it afforded for the company of many dear friends from Pennsylvania and Jersey; but I thought it a real privilege to be united with them in their various exercises and concerns and in the enjoyment of some Christian fellowship. It was an interesting meeting, friends being brought into deep and solemn feeling in regard to the continuance and the many attendant enormities of the slave-trade. After some time spent in patient deliberation, and, I trust, as it related to many dear friends, in waiting upon the Lord, a committee was appointed to obtain an interview with the influential members of the Executive Government at Washington, and, if the way should open for it, to urge their interference with France, and to persuade them, if possible, to take some decided measures for stopping that most detestable traffic. I dined at Thomas Stewardson's with Richard Jordan, and spent part of the evening with R. J., Joseph Whitall, &c. It is a house that I love to visit. Samuel and Jane Bettle are among my kind and faithful friends, and they have an interesting family. I spent Seventh-day evening in very agreeable and interesting company at Edward Randolph's, an upright elder, and I look to him as one of my staunchest friends.

We crossed the river in the horse-boat, and got to meeting at Newtown just as friends were collecting. I was

strengthened to labour more to my relief and confirmation than at many other times; and it was a comfort to me to believe that dear Richard Jordan could acknowledge unity with my exercises.

A meeting at Upper Evesham was a large gathering of Friends, but not a very triumphant time. We dined at my kind friend Josiah Reeves', and in the afternoon made a visit to dear old John and Elizabeth Collins, valuable and well-esteemed friends. It was a very satisfactory visit, and I trust it is not too much to say that we were baptized together into some feeling of that fellowship which is in the Truth. The meeting at Easton next day was but small. I was enabled to labour under the sensible feeling of the quickening and strengthening virtue of Divine love. I did not forget that it was the fortieth anniversary of my birthday, and I was brought low under some considerations connected with the recollection.

I had been for some time drawn towards the people of Bridgetown, a village on the Cohansey river. A meeting was held on Sixth-day evening at the Presbyterian Meeting-house, and largely attended. I was given up to the service of the Lord, and through holy help enabled to preach Christ Jesus and his great salvation. The meeting was very quiet, and it was a comfort to find Friends were not dissatisfied with my labours. We had cause to rejoice together in hope that the blessed cause did not suffer, and I came away next morning in peace and thankfulness.

3rd mo. 31st. — The week-day meeting in Pine-street, through the aboundings of heavenly love, was, I trust, a season of refreshment and the renewing of strength to some exercised disciples. A meeting is appointed for the people of colour of that part of the city, to be held there this evening, at seven o'clock. Oh! may it please the Lord to grant us his presence, and to shed abroad the influences of his heavenly love.

Having completed his engagements, for the present, in Pennsylvania, William Forster again entered the limits of New York Yearly Meeting.

4th mo. 30th. New York.—My late visit to Long Island has left the impression of my being cleared out from that important portion of this Yearly Meeting. I was at Flushing on First-day, at Matinicock on Third-day, and at Westbury on Fourth-day. I believe I was faithful to my gift, and emboldened to preach the gospel of Christ in a full and unequivocal testimony to his eternal divinity, and the blessings procured for man by his coming, sufferings, and death; and at the same time to lay before them my apprehension of the hardness of heart into which I believe that many have lapsed, in consequence of the scepticism which so generally and sorrowfully prevails. Some of their views may be considered as a near approach to the infidelity and impiety of the French school. The manner in which they treat the character of the Saviour is shocking in the extreme; and they do not hesitate to speak of the Holy Scriptures as designed exclusively for the age in which they were written, and of no importance to us of the present generation. At the late Quarterly Meeting of New York, which was held last week, Elias Hicks came out with the most open exhibition of his infidel notions that I ever heard from him, or that he perhaps has ever made.

The work I have so long had in view, a digest of the laws of the different States affecting slaves and free coloured people, is in progress. A young man, an attorney in Philadelphia, the son of my friend Daniel Stroud of Stroudsborough, has it in hand; he is hearty in the cause: I augur great things from its publication.

5th mo. 7th. Manhattanville, New York.—Last evening, through the renewings of the love and power of Christ, I was enabled to labour in word and doctrine to my own relief in much plainness of speech. I preached the way of life and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Monthly Meeting on Fourth-day was a memorable time to me. I was much enlarged in feeling and expression, my spirit being for the moment raised out of the depths. I was fortified against the fear of man, and laboured honestly against a worldly, self-righteous spirit. And it was given me again to speak a word for the comfort and confirmation of the poor and tribulated of the flock. The Lord alone knows what have been

my conflicts and sufferings, my deep and sore discouragements and afflictions among friends in that city; but now in great mercy He has delivered my soul.

After being in the State of Connecticut, and visiting several meetings in the States of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, William Forster attended the Yearly Meeting for New England. He then spent several days on the island of Nantucket. The prospect of a long journey into the Southern States still pressed heavily upon his mind; and he continued to desire that he might not enter upon the service without being favoured with a confirming evidence that it was a Divine requiring. Home presented its many attractions; and the thought of rejoining his beloved wife and son brightened in his view. With these anticipations he writes on his return from Nantucket:—

The Lord has dealt bountifully with us during the whole course of our separation; and surely we have great cause to worship before Him in filial reverence, and with thanksgiving and praise to bless his holy name, that through all our many trials He hath ever been our stronghold and sure hiding-place, and only present help. O may we seek to serve Him with a more entire dedication of all our time, and strength, and talents; and to trust in Him at all times without wavering.

My prospects southward are almost constantly before me; and many are my very low moments under the pressure of the exercise. It is a very formidable undertaking. When I consider how near the accomplishment of it will bring me to the day of my liberation, I am animated to persevere, and strengthened in faith to offer myself up unreservedly to the disposal of my God and Saviour.

Again he writes, from Crosswicks, New Jersey, with the same prospect in view:—

It is a great undertaking, and I cannot but regard it as the most proving sacrifice of feeling to which I ever was called; and I ought to regard it as a special mark of the condescending mercy and love of our Lord and Saviour that I am at times sensible of divine support, and, through heavenly help, so far enabled to offer up myself to the service of the Lord, that I have scarcely a wish to draw my neck out of the yoke. But sometimes I cannot but desire that I may be favoured with all the evidence of the requiring of the divine will of which I may be counted worthy. But what cause have we to bow before the Lord with reverent thanksgiving, that, according to our limited capacities, He is pleased to give it to us to enter into some little understanding of that blessed word of Truth, "Is there anything too hard for ME?" Praises to his ever-worthy name, there is nothing too hard for those who act in obedience to his will, with humble reliance upon the aid of his Holy Spirit. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

CHAPTER XXIX.

FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA.

TRAVELS IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

WILLIAM FORSTER now entered upon his long anticipated visit to some of the Southern States, which occupied rather more than six months. A peculiarly touching interest was added to this period of his labours in America, in consequence of his hearing of the illness and death of his "beloved and honoured father," during that time. The following extracts from letters to his wife will be read with interest:—

1824. *9th mo. 25th. Winchester, Virginia.*—It is indeed a hard attainment to be careful for nothing,—to be kept from that carefulness by which we are in danger of being tempted to relax in the steadfastness of our confidence in God. Perhaps something approaching towards this undue anxiety has pressed too much upon my mind. We have not less, I suppose, than 600 miles to travel in a direct course, to the farthest meeting in Tennessee, most of the way through parts of the country remote from Friends. Having entered more deeply of late into the abomination and sin of slavery, and all its attendant horrors and cruelties, my spirits are somewhat overborne in anticipating the distress I must expect to pass through during the winter, on seeing and feeling so much of the sufferings of my fellow-creatures without being able to relieve them. Never was I more sensible of the need of help from above than at the present moment. I dare not doubt that, as I seek to be preserved watchful and devoted, our compassionate Saviour, in the faithfulness of his love, will be pleased to approve Himself my strength and my shield.

The new Act of Parliament prohibiting the sale or transportation of negroes from one island to another in the West Indies is a most important measure. I cannot hear that it has appeared in any American paper; and I am much inclined to suspect that the editors do not want to give it publicity. The trade in slaves from Virginia and Maryland to the States bordering on the Mississippi is carried on to a dreadful extent. The landlord where we lodged last night told us that in "the month of August last" there were no less than fifteen of these slave-dealers in their neighbourhood endeavouring to induce the farmers to sell. They are the most anxious to obtain young negroes from twelve years of age to twenty-five, to work as field slaves on the cotton plantations. They are drawn from these parts into Tennessee, and then taken down the river to Natchez, where there is a regular slave-market; and the planters come from Alabama, Louisiana, &c., to make their purchases. The American internal slave-trade is a subject that has very deeply interested my feelings since I was in these parts before.

10th mo. 8th. Pittsylvania Court House, Virginia.—I had a kind and very interesting letter from my dear brother Josiah. His account of my beloved father is keenly touching to the liveliest sensibilities of my nature. I know it is not reasonable to expect he will much longer retain his accustomed vigour, yet I hope to be permitted to see him before the infirmities of age shall have much increased upon him.

We finished reading J. J. G.'s book on the "Peculiarities," &c., to-day. I think it is a very luminous and faithful exhibition of Christian principle, and have enjoyed much sweetness of religious fellowship with him whilst reading it. I am almost impatient for the appearance of his other work:* I think it will be no less interesting to me. What a favour it is, both to himself and others, that he is brought to seek a firm establishment in the Truth, that the Lord has been graciously pleased to accept of his talents, and that He is sanctifying them to the furtherance of his own purposes.

* His "Essays on Christianity."

After enumerating the meetings attended in North Carolina, since coming into that State, and those in prospect for several days to come, W. F. says :—

10th mo. 20th. Near Rocky River Meeting-house, Chatham Co.—In eight or nine days the Yearly Meeting will be at hand. About ten days after that, will, I trust, clear us out from these parts of Carolina. We must then set to in good earnest, and encounter the difficulties of the mountains on our way to Tennessee. I sometimes feel enough to satisfy me that I am here in the way of my duty, and I do not know that I have reason to doubt that it is in the right time. My ministry is often, to my own apprehension, in much weakness; but I sometimes feel myself borne along by a lively current of that love—I trust it is the love of Christ—which seeks the best and everlasting welfare of my fellow-creatures, and especially of our fellow-professors in religious Society. We see but little of slavery in these parts of the State, no more than if we were in Pennsylvania.

11th mo. Stokes Co.—Thy expression of sympathy with me under the affliction of my dear and honoured father's illness, and the great kindness of my brothers and sisters in writing to me so frequently and with so much minuteness, and with such evident tenderness of consideration for my feelings, has been a real alleviation to my sorrow.

We are now passing on towards Tennessee, with the prospect of taking the meetings belonging to Westfield Quarterly Meeting by the way. I suppose it is not much short of 150 miles from this place to the nearest meeting in that State, and we shall be likely to have some rough, tedious travelling on crossing the Alleghany; so that it must be several weeks before we enter on our visit in South Carolina.

20th. Fifth-day.—We were at a small meeting to-day, with which I trust we may consider that we have peacefully cleared out of New Garden Quarterly Meeting. It was held in a poor, cold house, without door or window, and very open between the logs. I trust that our Lord and Saviour condescended to draw near to us in our waiting before Him;

and that, under the influence of his love, I was enabled to labour for the awakening of the earthly-minded, and to speak a word for the comfort and refreshment of those that were weary. We came eight miles on our way this afternoon, and have thirty-two miles to travel to-morrow to Deep Creek, where Westfield Quarterly Meeting is to be held.

26th. Westfield.—I am increasingly convinced, and it is often the burthen of my exercise where I go, that our accountableness to God is according to the measure of light we enjoy. But I have thought that there is a possibility of people's being taken with much that is amiable and valuable in the simplicity and purity of our profession, and of their being brought to see much of the excellency, both of the principle and of its effects; yet, not being brought under the power of conviction, nor made subject to that which baptizes, and crucifies to the world, it becomes evident to others that the work is superficial—there is not that depth of feeling and thorough devotedness to God which we regard as clear and unequivocal testimony of discipleship to Christ, but mere sentiment and approbation; and we know this sentimentality in religion does not make the best of Quakers. It is not improbable that many, having the principles of Friends so clearly exhibited as they are in the "Peculiarities," will be brought thus far; and perhaps we may be tempted to too much earnestness to bring them yet further forward. I never was more strongly attached to the testimonies and principles of Friends than of later time; but perhaps was never less anxious that our peculiar views should be embraced by those whom I know and love, or by those amongst whom I travel. My most earnest desire is that every one may be brought to a deep-felt repentance towards God, and a saving faith in our Lord Jesus Christ—that they may come under the teaching, and be made subject to the government, of the Holy Spirit; and there I wish to leave them. If they are accepted of the Lord, we cannot but have fellowship with them in his love.

After the conclusion of his labours in the western parts of North Carolina, William Forster crossed the

Alleghany Mountains into Tennessee. The number of Friends in that State was small. The few meetings in which they were distributed constituted a Quarterly Meeting, forming part of North Carolina Yearly Meeting. He visited them all, and laboured much among them in the love of Christ.

Travelling now in the midst of slaveholders, he was often deeply affected in beholding the evils of the system, and strongly confirmed in the conviction of its inherent sinfulness. Though in East Tennessee the proportionate number of slaves was not large, and perhaps he there saw the "domestic institution" in its mildest form, his heart could not but yearn in sympathy towards the afflicted sons of Africa, whilst his Christian concern was kept alive on account of those who held them in bondage. With a view of more accurately ascertaining the then existing condition of slavery, he had printed a set of queries, which were addressed to individuals in different localities with the request to hand him "the information required, and such other particulars, founded on fact, as were the result of personal observation." As evidence of the liveliness of his interest, and the comprehensiveness of his solicitude respecting the whole subject, these queries are still valuable; and scarcely less so are the answers selected from a few which have been preserved, showing the state of slavery as it prevailed between thirty and forty years ago. Both are therefore subjoined.*

* QUERIES.

Has there been any increase in the slave population in your neighbourhood within the last seven years?

Is there any visible improvement in the condition and treatment of the slaves?

Little did William Forster think, when, in the heart of Tennessee, and, geographically, almost in the centre of the whole circle of American slavery, he thus sought to take the gauge of the anti-Christian

Is there any increase of a disposition on the part of the planters towards emancipation?

Have there been any instances of manumission, or slaves left free by will, within the last seven years?

What are the circumstances as to morals and industry of those slaves that have been recently set free?

Is marriage encouraged among the slaves by their masters, and what is their form of marriage?

Have there been any recent instances of husbands being sold apart from their wives, or wives from their husbands, or young children from their parents?

Is there any increase of attention paid by the planters to the education of the slaves?

Are there any slaves members of religious societies in your neighbourhood? and of what society?

What is the general appearance of the morals of those who make a profession of religion?

How is the First-day of the week spent by the slaves generally?

Are those that are able to read generally provided with the Scriptures?

Is any difficulty thrown in their way in their attendance of public worship?

Are they held by planters in small companies, or large gangs?

Are they worked under the care of overseers? and is there any appearance of an increase of humanity on the part of the overseers?

Are they generally worked by their masters, or let out on hire?

What are the hours of labour?

What punishment is in use, and by whom is it administered?

Are there instances of the magistrates interfering in cases of excessive cruelty?

Do they board in the house, or are they put upon allowance?

Is there any improvement in regard to the diet of the slaves, and what is the kind of food provided for them?

Is there any improvement in their clothing and bedding, and habitations?

How are they attended in time of sickness?

What is the treatment of the aged slaves, and those that are past labour?

What is the general disposition of the State Legislature, and those in power, towards an amelioration of the condition of slaves?

system, in its physical, moral, and religious aspects, that in those very parts—on a heaven-sent embassy of freedom and of peace—he should after many years lay down his own life. Read in the light of

FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR.

Is there an increase of the free coloured people within the last seven years?

Is there any improvement in their morals, and industry, and good management?

Are they encouraged to educate their children? and do they avail themselves of such opportunities as are afforded them?

What is their occupation? are they husbandmen or mechanics? and are there instances of their accumulating property?

ANSWERS FROM PERQUIMANS AND PASQUOTANK COUNTIES, NORTH CAROLINA.

We believe there is but little or no increase in the slave population; that the emigration, by removals and traffic in them, and deaths, will equal the births.

A considerable improvement is manifest in their treatment.

There is an increase of conviction of the inconsistency of slavery, but little disposition to emancipate them.

Several instances of slaves left by will to be free after a certain term of years.

The courts generally discourage emancipation; but there are instances where the court has freed them.

They may be considered nearly equal with the whites who are destitute of the benefits of having their minds improved by education, &c.

When slaves agree to live as man and wife, constancy is mostly encouraged, and some are married by the same ceremony in common use, but not administered by any legal authority.

Many instances of husbands and wives, parents and children, being separated, sold, and taken to the Southern States.

Education not encouraged by owners.

Many slaves are members of religious societies; mostly of the Methodist, and some of the Baptist profession.

Some are sober and well inclined, others seem to be but little restrained by religion.

Most commonly they endeavour to attend places appointed for worship, but, with little appearance of gravity in their demeanour (a few exceptions), much inclined to revelling and feasting.

Those that can read we believe most commonly have the Scriptures.

succeeding events, these things tell with a pathos which needs no words to bring home the lesson they teach.

When "in watchings often, and in labours most

Some few hold large gangs, but most commonly in small companies.

Some considerable number are worked under overseers, and we think there is an increase of humanity towards them.

Most commonly worked by their masters, but there are many belonging to orphans who are exposed to hire annually.

Most commonly from sunrise to sunset, except two or three hours a day for meal times, and an hour or two on Second-day morning and Seventh-day evening.

Whipping is common, and generally inflicted by the master or overseer.

Nearly the same.

Cases of excessive cruelty are not very common, nor do magistrates often interfere when such cases occur.

Large gangs are generally allowanced, and small companies board with the family.

We think there is an improvement in their diet; corn, meal, pork, fish, and potatoes are provided for them; great variation in regard to quantity; for bread one peck of corn or meal a week is generally given. Some allow six pounds of pork, and others only three pounds of pork, with the addition of some fish, per week.

Some improvement in their clothing, bedding, and habitations.

Most commonly, when dangerous, a physician is employed; the interests of the planters generally stimulate them to give some attention to their slaves in sickness.

Sometimes, when slaves are aged, and of little value, the owner allows them the privilege of working for themselves; some are careful to provide for such, not many cases occur when past labouring.

We believe the general disposition of the State Legislature, and those in power, are very little in favour of improving the situation of slaves in any respect, only as regards their own interests.

A very considerable increase of the free people of colour.

We think there is but little improvement in their situation in any respect.

There are some who endeavour to have their children instructed, but no opportunity of sending them to school, nor are they allowed to go to school among the white children.

There are many instances of their acquiring small portions of property, but no cases of any considerable value.

abundant," it was William Forster's wont to dwell much upon his unworthiness and unprofitableness. And perhaps it was needful that some special ballast should be provided for a ship that, on occasions, had to carry so much canvas even in stormy seas. "Upon every glory," it is said, "there shall be a defence." Even the Apostle Paul had his "thorn in the flesh—the messenger of Satan to buffet him,—lest he should be exalted above measure." William Forster well knew that between true Christian humility and undue discouragement there is no necessary connection; and if, in his case, the one was too apt to run into the other, his humility was of so genuine a character that it ever and again brought him to the practical solution of the Christian paradox—"when I am weak, then am I strong." From the greatest depths of self-abasedness he was often raised, in the power of the Spirit, to proclaim "the Glory of Christ," and the fulness and freeness of His salvation. With this kept in view, the following characteristic record can scarcely fail to interest the reader, even if the tone of feeling which pervades it should create a little surprise.

12th mo. 12th. Near Lost Creek Meeting-house, Jefferson Co., Tennessee.—It has been a dismally wet day, such an one as I think we have not had for many months. The roads are extremely bad and difficult, such as we should consider almost impassable in England; so that with the near approach of winter, and not knowing but that the ferries may be rendered dangerous by floating ice, I am not without many discouragements, and have need to call into exercise all my little store of faith; which seems to be now less than ever. I trust I did not venture upon this extensive undertaking without very earnest desires that my proceeding might be in the counsel of

the divine will. I waited until I believed the necessity to be laid upon me; and very powerful was the feeling of love with which my mind was drawn towards these remote settlements of Friends. But, now I am come, how humbling is the sense of my weakness and insufficiency for the work of the Lord, and how little does it seem that I am allowed to do towards the help of others! I think it is impossible for me to convey by any language with which I am acquainted, the sense of unprofitableness which follows me from place to place. My coming into America, and all the sufferings and labours by which I have believed myself called to make proof of my discipleship to Christ, seem to have answered so very little purpose.

My poor sinking heart is at times ready to fail me, when I consider that letters may convey additional cause for anxiety respecting my beloved and honoured father.

From Tennessee he pursued his journey into South Carolina. At that time there were still a few meetings of Friends kept up in that State.

1825. *1st mo. 1st. Near Bush River Meeting-house, South Carolina.*—There is something solemn and peculiarly interesting to me in the opening of this new year. I would hope and trust that, in the mercy and goodness of our Heavenly Father, many blessings are in store for us; but we must expect our trials, that our faith and love will continue to be brought to the test. I know that I need so much more than many others, the discipline of suffering, and a frequent repetition of chastening, to keep me humble, and watchful, and constant in prayer, that my heart is sometimes ready to fail in the anticipation of these trials, which I can acknowledge to be salutary, and even necessary to the furtherance of that work which I reverently trust is begun in my heart. Art thou ever permitted to pray for me that I may grow in grace, and be strengthened in faith, and made more to abound in the fruits of holiness and love; that my religion may be made more thoroughly practical and devotional? This is earnestly my desire for myself.

Edgefield District, South Carolina, Seventh-day.—I don't know that at any time, since our long and painful separation, I have had so much of the indescribably sweet and endearing anticipation of coming home, as since we left Augusta late yesterday afternoon. It was one of our furthest points to the South; and, having doubled that, it made me for the moment, and now and then during many of the long hours of the day, not a little buoyant in spirits.

From Edgefield, S.C., he made a short journey across the border of the neighbouring State of Georgia, and writes to a friend in Philadephia :—

Augusta, Georgia, *First Month, 1825.*

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—We seem to have been long separated from that society most congenial to our feelings; and at no time since I first set my foot upon these shores, have I felt myself more of a stranger in a strange land, than since we arrived here this evening. But sitting silently and pensively in our chamber, and contemplating my present remote situation from my nearest and dearest friends, it was pleasant to me, and more than pleasant, it was strengthening and comforting, to believe that there were a few friends in whose sympathies I had some place, and who were willing to cherish a tender and brotherly solicitude for my preservation and support.

The hope that I may number thee with them, brought me once more to the determination I had often formed, since we entered upon this arduous, extensive journey, of reviving myself in thy remembrance. The many marks of thy brotherly, I may say fatherly kindness, by which thou hast so liberally evinced thy friendship and love, are not I trust lost upon me.

Whilst I desire to look up through all secondary agency to the true Source of all my blessings, I wish to be kept alive to the tender consideration of my friends; and the truly delicate manner in which thou hast touched one of the most sensitive spots in my nature will, I believe, never be forgotten by me

as long as I remain alive to a sense of the friendship of those I love, and the many favours which have attended me in my tribulated path in this land.

It is now some time since we heard from our friends in Philadelphia. By this time I suppose you have it cold. Here the roses are in bloom in the open air, and the weather is pretty much like what we should call in Dorsetshire our finest autumnal weather in the Eleventh Month. In the country, the people sit with their doors open through the day; but as soon as night sets in, they heap as much wood on the hearth as would be thought sufficient for a winter's fire in the coldest part of New York State. With the exception of a very slight sprinkling one morning, we have had no snow. We saw the tops of the mountains in Tennessee partially whitened several times; but, during our travels in Tennessee, and since we came into South Carolina, we have had heavy rains; and I have not at any time met with so much impediment from high waters as within the last three or four weeks.

I remember once hearing thee speak of the salubrity of the mountains in Carolina and Georgia, and, from what we have seen and heard, I much incline to think that the foot of the blue ridge will be found to come the nearest to the Montpelier of America. They are said to have a delightfully fresh breeze in the summer months. The water is of first-rate quality, and the air is free from those damps so injurious to the health of the lowlanders in the Southern States; so that, as the resources of this wonderful country become more fully developed, invalids will find they have no need to repair to France or Italy for a mild climate. Happily for the mountaineers, slavery, though it exist, is exhibited in its mildest form. In East Tennessee, and the upper parts of Virginia, and even in the western part of the Carolinas, slaves are generally held in small companies, well clothed and well fed, and an increased disposition to humane and considerate treatment is said to prevail. But still they are slaves.

We hear a most appalling account of the lower districts, where a great many are brought in from Virginia, &c. There seems to be a great anxiety, on the part of the planters, to

vest their capital in this kind of "stock;" and, so long as the demand for cotton continues, we must expect that the ruling passion of avarice will steel the hearts of these poor people to the perpetuation of these horrid measures. But I can perceive they are sensibly alive to the possible effects of the importation of the Egyptian cotton into the British market; and I cannot but entertain the apprehension that the trade in Carolina has nearly reached its zenith. Should the importation increase, it will undoubtedly have an indirect, if not a more immediate bearing upon the great question of gradual emancipation.

We went home with Samuel Spencer, where we stayed that night, and until after dinner the next day. Before we parted from our dear friends, my heart being enlarged in the love of Christ, we had a heart-tendering opportunity. The forenoon was very wet; but, towards evening, it cleared up, and we had a dry ride back to Bush River, a little after sunset.

On First-day the meeting at Bush River was not so large as I had hoped for; but, seeking to be given up to the service of the Lord, I was helped to labour in the work of the gospel, warning and pleading with my fellow-mortals, as I believed the word to be given me. I trust there was a sense of the divine presence upon the minds of many towards the close of the meeting, when I ventured to call upon the name of the Lord; and there was a precious feeling of the mercy of God our Saviour among us. We parted one from the other in much tenderness and mutual affection.

We came about three or four miles on our way to Walter Herbert's. We spent the evening and lodged there. Before we came away this morning, I was strengthened to faithfulness to that which I believed to be laid upon me towards the friends of the house, in the discharge of which I felt quietness and peace.

My heart is almost overborne with a depressing sense of the loneliness of my path. I dare not doubt it was in obedience to the call of the Lord that I gave myself to come to this remote part of the continent, and many have been the trials and toils attendant upon the sacrifice. May it please the

Lord, my Almighty Saviour, to grant me strength to endure whatever He may be pleased to appoint, that whether I am brought forth publicly into view among the people, or my portion be in secret suffering, I may be comforted by a sustaining evidence of his divine approbation.

We set off soon after sunrise; the road for four miles was much like that we travelled yesterday. Afterwards we came into a district of sandy pine-land, which continued till we reached the Savannah river. In some places it was pleasant travelling, but in others it was much cut, and tedious travelling. We breakfasted at the Piney-Wood-house, and then came to Augusta.

As we drew near to Hamburgh, we met and passed several waggons; and there were people travelling on the road, which gave it more the appearance of approaching a city than anything we had seen for many weeks. Hamburgh is a newly-erected village on the north side of the Savannah.

From Augusta, Ga., he proceeded to Charleston, where he received the intelligence of his father's decease. His letter to his wife describes his feelings on the occasion.

1825. *1st mo. 20th. Charleston, South Carolina.*—I have very acutely felt the affliction of which thy late letters were the messengers. It is hard to me really to bring the thing home that my beloved and honoured father is no more; but at times I have a deep and very lively sense of this affliction, and I trust that I am not altogether insensible to those consolations which seem to have so much abounded with you on the occasion. I wrote to my dearest mother by the ship which, I suppose, sailed yesterday. It was not fully expressive of my feelings towards her in her deep tribulation. She is very much present with me, and most tenderly do I sympathize with her in her many sorrows.

We have been at five meetings in Charleston—three in Friends' meeting-house, and two in meeting-houses belonging to the Methodists. A meeting is appointed in one of their

houses in the suburbs for this evening, and we have obtained the use of a Presbyterian Meeting-house in the thickly-settled parts of the city for to-morrow evening. We have the comfort of a good hope that we shall be at liberty to leave Charleston on Seventh-day morning.

Though William Forster had now spent more than five months in the Slave States, and, both in a religious point of view and with reference to the absorbing question of Negro bondage, his visit at Charleston had been one of more than ordinary interest, few of his letters relating to this period having been preserved, the account of his gospel labours in the Southern States is left very incomplete. His verbal statements, however, after his return home, of what he there saw and felt, were of the most touching kind; and few who heard them would easily forget the recital.

On leaving Charleston he passed into the eastern parts of North Carolina, and Virginia. Emigration to the Western States, impelled by the accumulating evils of slavery, had not yet greatly lessened the body of Friends in those districts; and their number, at that time, was still considerable. In now going to visit them he "very earnestly desired that all his movements might be in the freshness of the love of Christ, renewed from day to day." But it is not till he had reached some of the remotest parts of North Carolina that we meet with the following remarks:—

3rd mo. 1st. Near Little River Meeting-house, Perquimans County.—My heart is heavy, and my spirits are rather more than usually depressed; but I must exert myself and send thee, if it be but a very short letter, from Elizabeth City, where we hope to lodge to-morrow night. We have been

favoured to follow up our prospects as rapidly as I could have reasonably expected since my last. From Neuse River it took us three days to go down to Core Sound: we were with Friends at their meeting on First-day, and, through the aboundings of heavenly goodness, my heart was so much enlarged in the love of Christ, that I did not dare to doubt that, much as it had cost us to come so far, we were among them in the ordering of Divine Wisdom. We set off from our kind and loving friend Francis Macey's, on Second-day morning, lodged that night at General Hatch's, a large, and I should hope, a humane slaveholder, where we were handsomely and hospitably entertained; the next night at Cox's Bridge; on Fourth-day we reached our friend John Davis's, at Turner's Swamp, and on Fifth-day attended a meeting at Contentnea. It was like a large general meeting, Friends having come from other meetings for several miles round, and many of their neighbours with them. We had to wait long for the blessing, but at length our gracious Lord was pleased to shed abroad the sweet influence of his gathering and healing love, and we parted from Friends in much tenderness of spirit. In the evening we had a meeting with the few Friends in the neighbourhood of Holly Spring, at the house of the widow Hall. On Sixth-day we travelled thirty-eight miles, and lodged at a house of private entertainment, about six miles on this side Tarborough. On Seventh-day we got to a decent inn at Halifax, on Roanoke River, crossed the river early on First-day morning, but, suffering detention from not having a companion that knew the road, we did not get to Jack Swamp till half-an-hour after the usual meeting-time. The meeting was very small; but, being enabled to discharge the duty laid upon me, I was easy to proceed without any further opportunity.

On Second-day we travelled to Vicks, in Virginia, thirty-seven miles, lodged at Benjamin Jordan's, brother to my beloved and honoured friend Richard Jordan. We had a meeting with the few Friends, and a pretty many of their neighbours black and white, on Third-day, and that evening got to the house of a friend belonging to Black Creek Meeting.

We had to ford deep and very fearful waters by the way; the river Nottaway, one of the branches of the Chowan, having largely overflowed its banks. The meeting on Fourth-day was but small. Our kind and careful guide, Joseph Jordan, conducted us back to his house in safety. The waters having continued to rise, we crossed at a bridge lower down the river, where they did not present quite so fearful an aspect. On Fifth-day we travelled into the neighbourhood of Rich Square; and on Sixth-day attended the Select Quarterly Meeting for the eastern district of North Carolina. We were but a small company, but I could not but believe that our gracious Lord was near, for the help and comfort of those that love him. Christopher Healy, from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was there; he seemed pleased to see us. In the meeting next day I was enlarged in the love and power of the gospel. In the meeting for discipline, I endeavoured to be faithful, and was favoured to feel some relief, especially in my concern to encourage friends to greater diligence in educating the black children under their care, giving them an opportunity of hearing the Scriptures read, and bringing them constantly to meetings. They have no less than 500 individuals of that description under the care of trustees appointed by the Yearly Meeting; to all intents and purposes, in the eye of the law, they stand as slaveholders, but there seems no help for it; the existing laws of the State of North Carolina do not allow of indiscriminate manumission.* It was considered as the only expedient Friends could devise to release them from a state of slavery. Some of them have been sent into other States; but they principally remain in this neighbourhood, and a great burden and charge they are to Friends: it is but a small proportion of them that do well. I am sorry to say that very little attention appears to have been paid to their education; but I think Friends are beginning to feel the necessity of exerting themselves a little more in this

* Up to very recent times there have been instances of Friends being the *legal* owners of slaves, as the only means of protecting them against the operation of the slave-laws, before they can be sent into free States to secure their complete liberation.

great duty. There was a large meeting at Rich Square, on First-day, which might be considered as an appendage to the Quarterly Meeting. I was engaged in ministry to some relief. On Second-day we travelled thirty-five miles, crossing the Chowan river in a large company, at a good ferry, managed, as most of them are in this country, by slaves. It has been a remarkably wet winter, and the swamps are very full of water. I think we did not ride less than four miles through the water in that day's journey. We were at a large meeting at Piney Woods to-day. We are to-night at the house of newly-married young people, where our comforts are greater than at some other places.

3rd mo. 10th. Isle of Wight County, Virginia.—We were at Little River week-day meeting, the 2nd of the Third Month; pretty many of the neighbouring people attended. I went that evening to Elizabeth City,—my trials and conflicts were many and very sore; but at meeting at the Narrows on Fourth-day, through the condescending kindness of our gracious Redeemer, I was enabled to labour to some relief. We went home that evening with our dear friend Caleb Morris, a valuable friend; he is much of an Israelite indeed: we were very comfortable at his house, but it was not my time for staying to rest, though we were kindly urged to it. We were at their meeting at Newbegun on Sixth-day: the weather was very wet and boisterous, but their members generally attended, and I was enabled to be faithful. On Seventh-day we had a meeting at Symon's Creek; it was far from small, and an awakening, healing, and gathering time it was, I humbly trust, to many. At four o'clock that afternoon we had a meeting for the black people in that part of the country. The afternoon was wet, and the roads very bad; yet there was a large gathering, especially of men; their behaviour was most orderly and exemplary. I was much enlarged in the sensible feeling of the love of Christ, and enabled to labour in the gospel with more freedom of utterance than I had dared to hope for. I had been previously tried with the fear that I should not be able to express myself in language suited to

their capacities; but whilst I was speaking that fear was very much taken away. I trust it was a good meeting; blessed be the Lord! Some of the poor black people were very tender and loving when I went among them after meeting. They were generally as decently clothed as our labouring people, and some of the young men far superior; and, in point of behaviour, their manners are in very many instances respectful, courteous, and polite, surpassing those of the lower class of white people, and I think quite equal to the general run of people of pretty good education.

On First-day we were at Sutton's Creek; a large meeting, and I trust good prevailed. On Second-day we were at Wells, in the morning, and at Beech Spring, on the other side of the Perquimans river, in the afternoon; both of them times of divine favour and considerable openness. Not feeling clear of Friends of Little River, we had a meeting appointed for Third-day; and, notice having been spread to other settlements of Friends, they came for several miles round the country. It was, through the goodness of the Lord, a time to be remembered with reverence, gratitude, and praise. I parted from my dear friends in much love, and came to Martha Newby's, at Piney Woods, which was the last Friend's house we were at in Carolina. Next day we reached William Porter's, at Summerton, in Virginia, and were at their meeting on Fifth-day; there was a marriage, and several besides Friends present. Yesterday I was at Johnson's Meeting, principally Friends. I was engaged under some feeling of religious exercise, but not to all the satisfaction I could have desired. To-day, at Western Branch, I was, in the great mercy of the Lord, enabled to speak of his love and power in Christ Jesus, to my encouragement and relief.

I feel more or less every day that my long-protracted sufferings in this land of many trials are drawing near to their close; and I give it out, almost wherever we go, that I expect to take the first ship from Philadelphia, after the Yearly Meeting. Thomas Evans, in a letter I had from him not many days ago, gave me a message from dear Isaac

Stephenson, importing that if I was at liberty to go by the packet of the 20th of Fifth Month, he hoped or expected to be ready to go with me. I do not place much dependence upon it; for I can hardly expect that he will be spared a visit to the Southern or Western States.

From Summerton, near the State line between North Carolina and Virginia, he bent his course northward, through the latter State to Baltimore.

3rd mo. 16th. At Chappel Benford's, Prince George's County, Virginia.—I have felt the spring of the ministry in myself to be very low; though, through the condescension of the Lord, I have at times been thankfully sensible of the flowing of that life and love which is not at our command. I often think of our beloved P. Gurney's expression in her last days, in allusion to her experience in the ministry; how entirely it was out of and distinct from herself.

In allusion to the "blank left in the circle of his nearest connexions and friends," he adds:—

Death is very awful, increasingly so in my view; but when I think of the glory that will follow to those who are accepted in Christ Jesus, the sorrows and pains of the last conflict seem very much to lose their poignancy in my apprehension. Oh, what should we do without the religion of the everlasting gospel of the dear Son of God! It was never more precious to me in bringing life and immortality to light, than of latter times, when the unction of the Spirit descends and rests upon the sacred truths contained in the doctrine of our Lord and his apostles: it seems for the moment as if the veil were drawn aside, and we were permitted to look straight forward to that enduring and incorruptible inheritance which the Lord has prepared for them that love Him. In this respect the Scriptures of the New Testament are especially valuable. Surely those whose hearts are in any measure expanded by the power of that love,

in which, in the good providence of God, they were transmitted to us, must desire their translation into every tongue, and that they may be rendered accessible to every son and daughter of Adam. The sorrows and trials which have been so largely my portion, in entering into the depth and extent of that dark, sceptical spirit so lamentably prevalent among Friends in America, have brought me more than ever to appreciate the kindness and love of our Heavenly Father, in having caused the light of his external revelation to break forth upon us; and I think that Christ was never more precious to me than since I have been so much in the way of those who call in question his glorious divinity, and the efficacy of his mediatorial offices.

20th. Petersburg, Virginia.—My brother J., in his last, mentioned the death of our honoured, beloved, and truly fatherly friend, Samuel Alexander. The impression attending his translation is so sweet and peaceful, it seems scarcely to admit of sorrow. He was a true disciple and faithful servant of Christ; and we may safely trust he has died in the Lord, and entered upon his heavenly inheritance.

25th. Near Waynoke Meeting-house, Virginia.—I very much desire to retain a place in the sympathies of all our dear friends, and that I may be so favoured with their exercise on my behalf that, in the remaining trials permitted me in this land, I may be supported, in humble confidence, in the faithfulness of our gracious Redeemer, and that, when exposed to the perils of the deep, my heart may be fixed, trusting in God.

4th mo. 1st. Dumfries, Prince William Co., Virginia.—I look with a steadiness of purpose, in which I feel much comfort and support, to taking my passage in the packet from Philadelphia in the Fifth Month.

William Forster had now returned from the South. That "opposition of science falsely so-called," which, "some professing," had elsewhere caused many to err, and to be drawn away from the faith of Christ, had found no entrance among Friends in the limits of

North Carolina Yearly Meeting. During the afflictions of the Church in those days, as in more recent trials, they had been remarkably preserved from the delusions of the enemy, and enabled to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "The Lord preserveth the simple;" and, in the remote parts of the Society which he had just left, William Forster had met with no obstruction to the free reception of the truths of the Gospel; the message of "peace through Jesus Christ," which he had to proclaim, had been cordially accepted. It was the more trying to him again to enter a very different atmosphere. On his arrival at Baltimore, he writes:—

7th. Baltimore.—My heart is made very sad and almost overborne by the spirit of infidelity which reigns and almost rages in some parts of this Yearly Meeting. I think there is a smaller number to stand against it here than among Friends further to the northward. I was at meeting at Alexandria on First-day, where, with few exceptions, Friends seem to be very much carried off; and I had peace in my endeavours to bear testimony unto Jesus as my Lord and Saviour. We had a meeting at Washington in the evening, where the same spirit prevails. On Third-day I had a meeting at Sandy Spring; it was very large, both of Friends and others. At the close, I requested an opportunity with Friends select, and, in much tenderness of spirit, endeavoured faithfully to discharge my duty in testimony to the blessedness of a lowly, teachable, and dependent state of mind—alluding to the 131st Psalm —and to warn Friends against that which tendeth to cavil and disputation, scepticism and infidelity. Towards the close of the opportunity, a friend with whom I had some acquaintance, and with whom I had lodged when I was there before, an elder of considerable influence, rose, and evidently endeavoured to do away with all that I had been engaged to

communicate; dwelling upon the word "scepticism," urging their favourite dogma, that we are not bound to believe what we cannot comprehend; and that all we have to do is to take heed to the Spirit of Truth in our own minds.

There can be little doubt that this "favourite dogma," so captivating to the superficial thinker, was the groundwork of many of those errors, and of that wide departure from "the word of the truth of the gospel," which cost William Forster so many conflicts and sorrows during his long sojourn in America. To demand the comprehensibleness of a doctrine, or a fact, as a condition of its belief, is surely as inconsistent with true philosophy as it is repugnant to sound theology, and manifests a state of mind the very reverse of that which really desires to be "taught of God," and to "receive with meekness the ingrafted word which is able to save the soul." We cannot, indeed, be too thankful that in granting us a revelation concerning Himself, and the work of his redeeming love in Christ Jesus, it has pleased our heavenly Father to accompany his word with abundant evidence that it comes from Him; and it is no less our duty than it is our privilege to endeavour to understand the evidence on which truth rests. But this does not imply that we are to receive nothing as truth which we cannot comprehend. The evidence may be perfectly clear to us, while the truth is utterly incomprehensible—a distinction which the right-minded inquirer will not fail to appreciate. For what would be our position if we were obliged to reject whatever is incomprehensible to us in the character and ways of the Eternal Jehovah? How utterly incompatible with common

sense is it, on the other hand, to profess a belief in the operations of "the Spirit of Truth in our own minds," and yet to discredit what, on incontrovertible evidence, that Spirit has revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures,* respecting the person, character, and work of Christ, or anything else connected with man's redemption, and the vast subject of the Divine government of the universe.†

* It was no equivocal testimony which George Fox bore to the divine authority of the Scriptures. "Christ," he says, "is *the* Word of God; His name is above every name, and over all things, He must have the pre-eminence. Yet, I say, the Scriptures of Truth, given forth from the Spirit of Truth, are *the words of God—God's words.*"

† There is much to admire in the spirit of some of the remarks of Schaff, in his history of the Apostolic Church. After repudiating "that hasty and positive dogmatism which, instead of seriously labouring to untie the Gordian knot, either refuses to see it or carelessly cuts it," he goes on to say that "the full and unconditional reverence for the Holy Scriptures, in which some modern schools of theology are more or less deficient, requires, wherever science cannot yet clear away the darkness, an humble submission of reason to the obedience of faith, or a present suspension of decisive judgment, in the hope that farther and deeper research may lead to more satisfactory results."—Schaff: "History of the Apostolic Church." Vol. i. p. 120.

CHAPTER XXX.

FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA.

CONCLUDING SERVICES IN AMERICA. RETURN HOME.

THE winding up of William Forster's labours in America was now at hand. On his return from the South he had come from Baltimore to Philadelphia, for the last time, to attend the Yearly Meeting about to be held there, before his departure to his native land. It was an occasion of no ordinary interest, and after its conclusion he speaks of it in a letter to his wife:—

1825. 4th mo. 23. Philadelphia.—The Yearly Meeting closed yesterday in much of a peaceful calm; and, I trust, friends are returning thankful in the persuasion that the Lord is still caring for his own cause. It is really remarkable, that, though this restless spirit, which is so much the torment of the church at the present day, has shown itself upon almost every occasion, yet in no one instance has that party prevailed. Many friends came forward and boldly and clearly evinced that they were neither afraid nor ashamed to show themselves on the Lord's side. The different sittings of the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders were opportunities of quiet, and I trust they were to the confirmation and comfort of many friends. I took an early opportunity to inform the meeting of my prospect of returning home. It drew forth much expression from friends whom I value and love. And when our * certificates were produced, on Fourth-day morning,

* His beloved friend Isaac Stephenson, who had also completed his religious visit to Friends in America, and was about to return with him in the same vessel to England, was in attendance at the same meeting.

there was the most remarkable flow of unity, and sympathy and love, that I ever remember to have witnessed. I think I have not, at any time since I left home, enjoyed more of the feeling of being in the bosom of the church than on that occasion.

Through the merciful kindness of our Lord and Redeemer, I am enabled to look forward with much peace and quietness to taking my passage on board the *Alexander*. The period of my departure is fast approaching; and I am thankful in feeling myself nearly released from further labour in this land: and, though I am without much sensible abounding in heavenly good, I am at times enabled, with reverent hope, to trust in the Lord that He will make a way for me through the deep waters, and restore me to my dearest, most faithful, and most affectionate wife.

He had gone forth at the call of his Lord, and with the cordial sanction of his brethren at home, on the Gospel Mission, which was now nearly brought to a close. Five years had been spent in this labour of love, and during that time he had visited all parts of America where Friends reside, including both the Canadas. With very few exceptions, he had been at all the meetings of Friends in the different Yearly Meetings in the United States, and some of them he had visited more than once. In many places he had extended his labours also to the public at large. Having received part in the "ministry of reconciliation," he had faithfully proclaimed the great truth that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." As an ambassador for Christ, he had earnestly besought his fellow-men to be "reconciled unto God; for He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Nor less had he

been concerned, whilst endeavouring always to keep in view the atonement of Christ in all the fulness and distinctness with which it is dwelt upon in the Apostolic writings, as the means of deliverance from the penal consequences of sin, to press home upon his hearers the practical bearing of this great fact of the Gospel, as the means also of imparting the power, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, of overcoming sin itself, of being made free from the dominion of evil, and the evil one, and of "perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." He was one of those faithful men, who, like the first promulgators of the Gospel, could honestly say: "We are not as many which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ."*

* With reference both to doctrine and practice, his ministry had been in beautiful accordance with the sentiments of the early Friends, as brought into view in the following remarks of the editor of the "Memoirs of J. J. Gurney;" p. 3, vol. ii.

"Christ," says George Fox, "gave Himself, his *body*, for the life of the whole world; He was the offering for the sins of the whole world; *and paid the debt and made satisfaction.*" And surely no one who did not, in his heart, feel the deep practical value of this precious truth, could have addressed his suffering friends in the following touching strain:—"The heavenly joy fill your hearts and comfort you in the inward man in all tribulations! The glorious light is shining, the immortal is bringing forth out of death; the prisoners have hope of their pardon, *the debt being paid, and they freely purchased by Christ's blood.*" Selections from George Fox's Epistles, by Samuel Tuke, pp. 12 and 17; Second Edition. Without needlessly multiplying quotations, this note may be closed by the following testimony, recorded among the dying sayings of a Friend in the year 1698. The passage, it may be observed, is, on account of its excellence, printed in large black letter, in the original editions of Piety Promoted. "Now is my soul redeemed to God, and He that hath redeemed me is near me. THE SUFFERINGS AND DEATH OF CHRIST, AND HIS AGONIES, THE SHEDDING OF HIS BLOOD, AND WHAT HE HATH DONE FOR ME, I FEEL NOW THAT I HAVE

His visit to the churches of those who bear the name of Friends, in America, was performed in troublous times; but, largely as it had been given him, on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for his sake, especially on account of the "spirit of error" which prevailed around him, his heart was kept open in love to all; and, in the midst of all his trials, it was matter of joy to him to meet, among his brethren on the American continent, so many who were firm in their allegiance to Christ, and steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints, having the same love, being of one accord, joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To these he felt united in the bond of Christian fellowship; and with these,—as workers together with Christ—he had laboured in harmony for the advancement and spreading of the Truth as it is in Him. If their united efforts had failed to heal the wounds of the church, or to avert the impending crisis, there is good reason to believe that they had been the means of checking the progress of error, and of preserving many from being carried away by its force.* The numerous letters addressed

THE BENEFIT OF ALL. BLESSED BE MY REDEEMER WHO IS NEAR ME." Piety Promoted, 2nd Part, p. 19; Second Edition. Truly could they, who had been brought to such an experience, feelingly adopt the language of the Apostle:—"We joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received *the atonement*." Rom. v. xi.

* Schism, even when unaccompanied with heretical opinions, is at all times to be deplored as a breach of the unity of a Christian community. But in connection with the division among Friends in America, which took place two years afterwards, and which is now historically known as the "Hicksite separation," it should be borne in mind that it arose almost entirely out of a difference of view respecting the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel. It was the foundation of the Christian faith—not the superstructure—which it was attempted to destroy. Elias Hicks and some of his more prominent coadjutors had not only disregarded,

to William Forster from all parts where he had been, and other evidences, clearly prove that his gospel labours had been largely blessed: not a few could rejoice and give God the praise, because through his means they had been won to Christ, or had been confirmed in their hold on his salvation. All that now remained to be done, was a few farewell visits among his friends of the neighbouring meetings.

5th mo. 15th. Philadelphia.—I returned on Third-day, well satisfied with the little excursion I had made in New Jersey. We were at Burlington, and at the Monthly Meetings at Evesham, Upper Evesham, Croswicks and Haddonfield; and at a large meeting at Cropwell this day week. I was mostly among friends with whom I was well acquainted; and their love to me, and to the truth as it is in Jesus, was much to my consolation and enjoyment.

but openly rejected the essential truths of Christianity, and, respecting the person and offices of Christ, had adopted and promulgated sentiments scarcely differing at all from the recognized opinions of that class of religious professors commonly called Unitarians. Yet, in regard to some other points, his followers, both before and after the actual separation, retained the views and practices to which, as members of the Society of Friends, they had been accustomed. On the question of worship and discipline, war, oaths, slavery, and in some other particulars, very little difference was apparent. And it was probably owing, in no small degree, to this circumstance, combined with personal and family considerations, that, at a time when educational advantages had long been in abeyance, and the prevalent neglect of the frequent and prayerful perusal of the Holy Scriptures, and of the literature of the early Friends, had left many in great ignorance of the saving truths of the Gospel, and of the nature and grounds of their religious profession, so large a number should have united themselves with the seceders.

In all movements *en masse* it may be regarded as an almost unavoidable characteristic that the few lead—and often *mislead*—the many. And it need not be matter of surprise that among the adherents of Elias Hicks there should have been many who followed him without entering upon a very minute examination of the merits of the controversy, and without being aware of the vital nature of the points at issue, or adopting

On Fourth-day, I was at the week-day meeting in Pine Street, in which, through the help of the Lord, I was enabled to labour very faithfully, and to cast off the burthen with which I had been sorely oppressed in feeling for the unbeliever and rebellious among friends of that meeting. On Fifth-day I was at Radnor Monthly Meeting: it was a time never to be forgotten by me. I was much engaged in pleading with the worldly-minded, the hypocritical, and the unbeliever. I believe I had the unity of faithful friends in my exercise, and was enabled to speak a word for their comfort. I endeavour to wear a cheerful countenance, but am sometimes very low in feeling for the distracted state of our Society, and my own very many infirmities.

Having taken leave of his friends of Philadelphia, he concludes his letter on board the steamer that brought him down the river to the vessel in which he was to embark for England.

his extreme views. With not a few of these, there is reason to believe, there was no conscious departure from the faith of their forefathers—no conscious and wilful rejection of known truth; though, by the act of separation, they unhappily became identified with a movement the true nature of which they did not understand, and the permanent consequences of which they did not foresee. Notwithstanding the change in their external position, their spiritual condition, probably, remained very much the same. Now that many years have passed away, and the spirit of antagonistic controversy has very much subsided, leaving room for calm, serious and prayerful investigation of the truths of the Bible, it is to be hoped that, through the divine blessing, and the effectual operations of the Holy Spirit, many will be led fully to appreciate the person, the character, and the work of Christ, and feel themselves constrained by love to Him, openly to avow the good old faith of the Christian Friend, cordially and thankfully accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the propitiation for our sins, and the Saviour of the world. Such an event could not fail to be cause of rejoicing and thankfulness to many who have learnt, with much interest and satisfaction, that during the fearful struggle through which the United States have been passing, many who bear the name of Friends, though not members of the Society, have, like the latter, borne a noble testimony both against slavery and against all war.

5th mo. 20th.—I am now on board the steam-boat passing down the Delaware. I suppose we shall go on board the *Alexander* immediately. I have been favoured to part from Friends in much love. There was much kindness, and openness and love manifested by the many who came to take leave of me last evening. Many more came this morning, and there was quite a large collection of friends of all descriptions to take me by the hand on board the steam-boat. We have many dear friends with us, from whom we must part at Newcastle. I feel much at the prospect of parting from my faithful, and long-loved friend and brother John Paul. Samuel Bettle, and his interesting son Edward; William, Thomas, and Charles Evans; John Cook, Thomas Kite, Isaac Morris, John Warder, and his son, and my dear and helpful friend Bartholomew Wistar, are of the number. His uncle, Thomas Wistar, gave me his arm from J. W.'s to the boat, and parted from me with inexpressible affection. I was much preserved in a calm and cheerful quiet, during this time of sympathy and love.

Through the mercy of our gracious Redeemer, I am borne up in the hope of Divine protection, and cherish a reverent confidence that He who has watched over my path in all the perils under which my faith has been exercised during our long separation, will not forsake me in those times of danger which we may have to pass through on the mighty deep.

The day after he writes on board the *Alexander* to his dear friend, and faithful companion during most of his religious engagements in the land he was leaving.

To John Paul.

5th mo. 21st.—The captain does not flatter us with the hope of a very short passage. It is the season of the year for light winds; we must expect calms and storms; but if, through the aboundings of heavenly mercy, my mind is happily staid on the Lord, I trust I shall be preserved from impatience on the one hand, and distressing fear on the other.

My heart is very tender in love towards thee, my beloved brother, and my many dear friends in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Jersey. I think it a great favour that my long-continued sufferings in America have been brought to so peaceful a close; indeed, such was the quiet in which my mind was sustained, and the fellowship enjoyed with those most dear to me to the very last, that I hardly could have asked for a richer or more abundant reward.

His homeward voyage was a favourable one, and on nearing the English coast he writes

To his Mother.

On board the ship *Alexander*, off the coast of Denbighshire,
Sixth Month 13th, 1825.

My dearest Mother,—I am so well aware of the pleasure it will afford thee, and my dear sisters and brothers, to receive the earliest tidings of my arrival, that I am desirous of having a letter in readiness for to-night's post, as we now entertain the hope that, if a steam-boat in sight will answer to our signal, we may be able to reach Liverpool this evening.

We have had a good, prosperous voyage of twenty-four days from Philadelphia, and nineteen from the capes of Delaware to Cape Clear. I trust it is not without a reverent, heart-tendering sense of gratitude to our great, Almighty Protector, that I recur to the many mercies that have attended us in the course of our passage. We have had but little summer weather, and often a heavy rolling sea breaking upon deck, which has occasioned me to be of necessity much confined either to my berth, or in a recumbent position in the companion house. I think the sufferings from sea-sickness have been greater than in the *Emulation;* and, though we have had the comfort of a spacious cabin, yet, our company being large, it was often extremely close.

Captain Baldwin, on his last return to Philadelphia in the Third Month, having found an unusual quantity of ice on the banks of Newfoundland, concluded, much to our relief and satisfaction, to steer further to the southward than the usual

course, and keep in the Gulf stream. Happily we missed the ice, but for one night we were ready to think we paid dear for it. The wind, which had been blowing several days very fresh in our favour, increased to a pretty heavy gale. The waves rolled with a tremendous swell, and beat upon us in every direction for several hours. The captain acknowledged that he had not often, if ever, met such a sea. For a time, whilst the water broke into our cabin, our situation was fearful; but during the whole of the storm my mind was mercifully preserved in a peaceful feeling of quiet, and never for a moment, since I came on board, have I had to doubt the propriety of my coming by this ship.

We got to soundings off Cape Clear on Sixth-day afternoon; but the fog was so heavy we could not discern the land: this was an anxious time to us all. I did not go to bed till two o'clock the next morning. On Seventh-day, about 8 A.M., we obtained a view of the Irish coast, and sailed along in sight of it for several hours. Steering across the Channel for Holyhead, towards evening the weather grew very thick, and, not being able to get a sight of the Lighthouse, the night was passed in the extreme of anxiety. I was more or less on deck great part of the night. Our captain was most attentive to his duty; and to me he has been at all times very kind and communicative; and, though a prudent man, he did not attempt to conceal his apprehension of danger. We made a tack just at the most critical period, which I cannot but think was the means of saving the ship from running upon the breakers. The captain stood off to sea the rest of the night, and soon after the break of day the weather cleared up; and about eight we had the inexpressible satisfaction to welcome our pilot on board. I enjoy unutterable comfort in the hope that we shall find my dearest Anna at Liverpool; and that, after the many long years of our separation, it will be given us to meet in peace and safety. I shall use my best endeavours to come to thee, my dearest mother, as soon as I can. Dear Isaac Stephenson has been a kind and valuable companion to me. Edward Wilson has proved himself very helpful and agreeable to us both. We have met with nothing but civility

from all our other fellow-passengers, and our good captain has throughout conducted himself towards me with marked respect and consideration, and the most friendly kindness.

Half-past three o'clock.—We are now on board the steamboat from Beaumaris to Liverpool. I long to hear where I am to expect to meet my darling boy. I scarcely allow myself to hope that he is at Tottenham; but if he is with you make him sensible of my dearest love, and tell him I hope to see him in a very few days.

As he had hoped, his wife was waiting for him on his arrival at Liverpool. That faithful companion had proved herself to be a true helpmeet to him during the whole of their long separation; and often, whilst deeply feeling her own share of the sacrifice, had she cheered his spirit by the word of well-directed encouragement to patient perseverance in the service of his Lord, until He should be pleased to say, "It is enough." A very few extracts from her many bright letters will suffice to indicate their general tone of self-denying love. The week after parting from him at Bristol, she wrote from her now solitary home:—

My depths have been at times *very deep;* I have *felt* indeed; but I must reverently acknowledge that I have been greatly, unexpectedly supported and comforted, again and again; and that in a way so sweet to my feelings! Sometimes I have felt such a cheerful calm; I could not doubt where it came from. And then such a lively sense, at times, that my dearest was only gone for a time,—that he is coming back to me! But though this has predominated above expectation, I have indeed had to drink a bitter cup—a very suffering path has this separation been to me; and must not I expect it will often be? I do not write in a complaining spirit—far otherwise, I trust—but in remembrance of the past and in anticipation of what may be the future. O that

we may yet be encouraged to "offer the sacrifices of righteousness and put our trust in the Lord;" then all will be well.

Our darling boy is finely and truly lovely—so very affectionate in his manner, in such a sweet disposition the last day or two. The day after I came home I made the exertion to walk out into the garden, which of itself I keenly felt. When we reached here, about half-past nine at night, I felt a truly cheering support. Thou seemed almost at my side, my love. I have had confirmation on confirmation that this is my right place. This will be to thy comfort, I know. Our dear mother is sitting by me. Her influence and company have been sweet; and I hope I have tried to make her comfortable. She is very dear to me; and I do not forget that she is *thy* own tender mother, and one who feels so much about thee. When this reaches thee, I suppose thou wilt be entering upon the very important work assigned thee. It seemed to elevate me above nature, to consider why thou wast there, and now "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Fear not, and all will be well with thee. I seem helped beyond myself: something like rejoicing.

Again, a few months later she wrote:—

1820. *9th mo. 16th.*—I was favoured to find our beloved child well and looking truly lovely, on our return from the Quarterly Meeting last evening; he seemed to be in the highest spirits at our coming home again. O how I should enjoy thy seeing his beaming countenance! How touching! But thou gives up these endearing treasures for the sake of thy dear Lord, and through his mercy and strength, thou dost not, and wilt not unlawfully look back. He knows what we feel, and, with tears in my eyes, I can look to Him at this moment, to comfort us.

On being informed, nearly three years afterwards, that his stay in America was likely to be prolonged, she wrote:—

Truly it has been a heavy storm upon me; but, my dearest, from this time write just as thou thinks to me in regard to it; for I trust I can now bear it, and surely we love to have only one object as much as possible. I think I have strength to encourage thee not to fear, but to attend to all the leadings of thy gracious Lord, without looking too much at the many discouragements which rest upon thy mind.

Let me ask thee, and thou need not be afraid of telling me, whether thou continuest to have a prospect of visiting the West Indies. The Lord will keep thee in safety there also, if it be so, I do believe. I greatly feel for thee in going into Carolina, &c., on account of slavery. I had hoped such suffering might have been spared; but I trust thy tender feelings will be mercifully remembered by Him who knoweth our frame, and that He will give help in trouble.

The wife that had so cheered her husband in his absence, now welcomed his return. From Liverpool they proceeded together to Tottenham, and after spending a little time with "his dearest mother" and beloved relatives there, they and their "darling boy" went down to their quiet retreat at Bradpole. After "many long years of separation" for the gospel's sake, their re-union was remarkably crowned by the Divine blessing. They had "sown in tears" —they were now permitted to "reap in joy;"—the "hundredfold in this life" was theirs, besides all that awaited them in "the life to come."

CHAPTER XXXI.

1825—1828.

It will not fail to be regarded as an important duty to maintain "the truth of the gospel," and, if need be, to defend it against the attacks of its adversaries. But, in "earnestly contending for the faith," we are too apt to forget that "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men"—"in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;—that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil." The cause of Christ does not need, and it will not accept, any support or defence made in a wrong spirit; and there are probably few things which put the Christian character to a severer test than long exposure to the fire of religious controversy, especially when it is accompanied with more or less of popular excitement. Such an ordeal William Forster had sustained in the course of his late engagements, and it was no small proof of the soundness of his Christian standing, that he came forth from it unscathed. "I wish to maintain," he had said on first coming into contact with the disturbing elements, "a loving, humble, watchful spirit towards Friends in every place;" and in such a spirit he had been remarkably strengthened to labour and to suffer long during the whole of his mission in America. Clothed with the same spirit,

he was now restored to the bosom of his own church —unshorn of his strength, through "the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

It was matter of joy to his friends thus to see him resume his wonted place in his own happy family, and in the larger sphere of his Christian usefulness. "I have now to record," writes J. J. Gurney, a few days after his arrival at home, "the happy return of our beloved William Forster to his native land! What a reward of faithfulness! What cause for thankfulness!" And early in the Ninth Month he speaks of their first meeting at Shaftesbury, where they had gone to attend their own Quarterly Meeting: "We arrived just in time for the Select Quarterly Meeting, and therein I met dearest William and Anna Forster. The Quarterly Meeting was well attended. William gave in his certificates, with a very instructive though short account of his arduous American labours."

They went on afterwards together to Bradpole, and J. J. Gurney continues:—"We enjoyed a delightful ride. Our *tête-a-tête* journey was a high privilege. During my stay at Bradpole, for three days, I feasted much on William's cultivated, enlarged, and intelligent mind. He is capital company. We had much conversation."

Though William Forster had not yet spent three months at home, since his return from America, his Christian interest had been so much awakened on behalf of the Friends of his own Quarterly Meeting, from whom he had been so long separated, that he felt it to be his duty thus early to pay them a visit of gospel love; and he was liberated by his Monthly

Meeting to hold meetings among them and the public more generally, as well as to embrace in this religious service some parts of Devonshire. After his short visit to William and Anna Forster, J. J. Gurney accompanied the former to Yeovil, and was present at a meeting he held there with the inhabitants. They then proceeded together to Bath, where they attended the Monthly Meeting, and, after "a solemn parting opportunity," at their relative P. H. G.'s, each pursued his own path of duty. No detailed account is left of William Forster's further movements; but the following brief reference to this engagement is characteristic:—

I went along from one meeting to another, often under a sense of my own infirmities, and sought to present myself before the Lord in a waiting and devoted mind. I was made glad in that salvation which is in Christ Jesus; and, in speaking of his love, and power, and wisdom, and faithfulness, my spirit was made very tender before the Lord. In some instances I thought I could perceive that the same feeling prevailed with others.

Not long after his return home Joseph John Gurney's "Essays on Christianity" came out. Such a work, "breathing the spirit of one whose heart was warmed and animated by the love of Christ," and replete with "sound scholarship," as well as presenting a clear and comprehensive, and purely scriptural exposition of those great fundamental truths of the gospel upon which the distinguishing views and practices of the religious Society of Friends are based, out of which they spring, and from which alone they derive their true support, could not fail to elicit the warm approval of William Forster, as it

did, to a large extent, that of his fellow-members, and of the general public. After a careful examination of the work, he writes:—

To J. J. GURNEY.

Bradpole, 1826.

Thou must allow me, in true brotherly love, to offer thee my warmest congratulations that thou hast been enabled to bring out thy Essays. I entertain a most lively and cheering hope of the usefulness of thy work; that, in this cloudy and dark day, it will tend to the establishment of the wavering, to the fortifying of the feeble-minded, and put to silence the cavils of many a proud and self-sufficient gainsayer. To the anxious inquirer after the truth as it is in Jesus, I firmly believe it will be rendered peculiarly helpful and valuable. In short, I cannot but look upon it as one of those labours of love that will be made to abound "by many thanksgivings unto God." It would be strange if I did not feel more than a common and passing interest in the work; for, I think, I never found myself, upon any occasion, so much anticipated; it gives utterance to my own views and feelings in such lucid and convincing language, and withal it solves some of my difficulties so thoroughly and satisfactorily.*

Early in 1826 his beloved friends Hannah and Maria Middleton were contemplating a religious visit in some parts of Germany. His feelings of Christian interest and sympathy towards them are expressed in the following letter:—

* Notwithstanding the many valuable treatises which have appeared on the same subjects, both before and since the publication of these Essays, the remark of the Editor of J. J. G.'s Memoirs still deserves attention:—"It would be difficult to find a volume in which so much sound and important information is digested in so small a compass, and in so useful and practical a form," as in this work.—"Memoirs of J. J. Gurney," by J. B. Braithwaite, vol. i., p. 291.

To MARIA MIDDLETON (AFTERWARDS MARIA FOX).

We cannot wonder that you should often be brought very low whilst dwelling on the prospect which is opening before you; my hope and confidence are strong that you will never be forsaken. We cannot say to what degree the blessing of the Lord may rest upon your present trials; and how far they may be rendered preparatory to a capacity to sympathize with those among his visited or seeking children in the parts to which, under the influence of his love, your spirits are attracted. Our past experience, which, little as we may think of it, ought never to be forgotten, has taught us that seasons of deepest humiliation and conflict are often succeeded by strong and satisfying confirmation in the sufficiency of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I feel for you both in the baptisms through which you have to pass; but if indeed they be needful for the accomplishment of the Divine purpose, surely we cannot ask to be spared the suffering, but only for patience acceptably to endure all that He may see meet to appoint.

He had often to go far to attend the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of which he was a member; but, large as was the amount of time and travelling involved, he was diligent in the service. When at home his thoughts were much occupied with the moral and physical condition of the poor around him, and he paid much personal attention to the relief of their wants.

The winter of 1825-26 had been one of peculiar pressure, amounting to panic, in the commercial world, and many persons and families had in consequence been brought into great distress and perplexity. Though William Forster was himself entirely disengaged from mercantile pursuits, he was prepared tenderly to sympathize with those who,

whether through their own imprudence or without any fault of their own, were partakers of the general calamity; and, when associated with his friends at the Yearly Meeting, he gave instructive evidence of his power to realize suffering and conflict of a kind which he had not experienced himself. He expressed a strong desire

That it might be given us to bear one another's burthens, to comfort one another, to live with a sense that we are pilgrims associated with fellow-pilgrims, that whilst knowing the corruptions of our nature, the plague of our hearts, and our manifold infirmities, we should be brought to see that it is of the Lord's mercy we are not consumed.

The more we know of the gospel, the deeper and more fervent will be our exercise for the gathering of our friends; that others may be brought to taste that which we have tasted; that they may be brought under the care and guidance of the Good Shepherd. If the feet of any be entangled, if the enemy has prevailed against them, they should become the subjects of prayer. This would increase the bond of love, bind us together in the fellowship of the gospel. We should be a comfort and a joy one to the other; rejoice over one another; because the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is extended to them.

On his way to the Yearly Meeting, and for some time after it, he was engaged in religious service in Sussex, Surrey, Essex, and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. In reference to this engagement, he says:—

I am thankful to say I find nothing new in my present path; it is really curious, and at the same time not a little confirming to me, to find how much I seem to be brought back to where I was fifteen or twenty years ago; just the

same sort of fears and cares—the same sort of opening and putting forth. And as a little faith now and then springs up, I have a hope that I shall be led along in safety; kept from doing anything that I ought not to do; and strengthened for the little service that is laid upon me.

Alluding to this visit, after returning home, he further remarks:—

The burthen is taken from me; and I am not insensible to the favour of being relieved from that which I had sometimes felt it hard to bear. I was much interested for the newly convinced persons; and felt myself enlarged among them in that love and sympathy which I know I could not have given myself. In most of the meetings I attended, first or last, I thought there was a very good feeling of openness; and that we were brought near together in that which is distinct from all that belongs exclusively to the creature. I neither sought for doctrine, nor did I shun it when it came before me; nor did I discover any repugnance to receive what I deem the Gospel of Christ, so far as I thought it was given me to make mention of it.

He now appears to have been permitted to enjoy a season of rest, amidst the comforts of home. On hearing of J. J. Gurney's prospect of a visit to Ireland in company with his sister, Elizabeth Fry, he writes:—

To J. J. GURNEY.

Bradpole, *Twelfth Month 17th, 1826.*

MY DEAREST JOSEPH,—I have been sitting alone, in a serious and thoughtful mind, looking over the travels of William Edmundson and John Fothergill, in America, as related in their respective journals; and now, before I retire, I must for my own satisfaction, try and write a line or two to thee, my beloved friend, which must (as I increasingly feel to be the case with all written communications) fall very far short of expressing what I feel towards thee, and for all who love our

Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. There is a certain sort of pain, and a pleasurable pain it is, in feeling to what a great degree Christian fellowship is an *inexpressible* enjoyment; and how hard it is fully to convey to our nearest friends, even to those by whom our individual phraseology is best understood, our spiritual views and feelings. I cannot but believe that the Apostles knew something of it; but in the unity of the Spirit they found a medium of intercourse opened to them, and to all who are seeking to walk in the Light, through which they could salute each other in the name of the Lord, and rejoice over one another's faith, and love, and fruitfulness. Theirs was a measure proportioned to their fulness of stature; and though ours may be according to our state of infancy in the new man—our infirmities, our remaining corruptions, the smallness of our faith, and the feebleness of our love—yet, through the goodness of the Lord, we are not strangers to that oneness of Spirit which is in the truth, that fellowship which is with the Father and with the Son. Much of this comforting and most precious enjoyment has been with me of late in thinking of thee.

I take comfort in supposing that perhaps thou art now permitted to rest for a little while upon thy oars, and quietly yielding thyself to the current which is bearing thee onwards to a larger and more important field of gospel labours.

I am very much of the opinion that the preparation for the work of gospel labour, as well as the actual accomplishment of every religious service, is of the Lord; and that of ourselves we cannot effect the one, any more than the other. There is such a vast and wonderful diversity in the means which God is pleased to employ in the accomplishment of his own purposes, both as it relates to different individuals and to the same person at different times; that it is not for us to say through what dispensations He may condescend to work in order to bring his servants into a state of acceptable dedication before him; or through what instrumentality such baptisms of the Spirit may be administered as may conduce to their fitness to receive the renewings of the Holy Anointing, or tend to their religious usefulness among those to whom He may be pleased to send them.

It is sometimes hard for us to believe that the temptations, the conflicts, the discouragements and perplexities, we have to endure, as they relate to others as well as ourselves, can ever be so far sanctified as to be rendered instrumental for the good of those for whom, under the influence of the love of Christ, we may be the most deeply interested; yet so I do believe it is. And the more we are plunged into these depths, the more fully are we prepared to speak of those deliverances, and of that redemption which constitutes the essence, and is the very joy of the Gospel of Christ. And thus, whatever may be given us to bring forth from the treasury, if it be but in the authority of his power and love, all will bear the evidence of the workmanship of his hand, and tend to the exaltation of his ever-glorious name. It is under some such considerations as these that I entertain a strong and cheering confidence that God will supply all thy need; and that, whatever may be the trials of the day, the Lord will be thy strength and thy shield. I have near sympathy and entire unity with thee in thy prospects towards Ireland; and I cannot but believe that the time, as well as the concern, will be found to be of the Lord's appointment.

It will be recollected that while travelling in America (p. 315, chap. xxiii.), William Forster was strongly impressed with the desirableness of preparing a select commentary on the several parts of Holy Scripture, adapted for the use of Friends. During the comparative leisure which was now allotted him in his quiet retreat at Bradpole, the thought of attempting to carry out such an undertaking had much occupied his mind. He alludes to it, among other subjects, in writing

To J. J. GURNEY.

1827. *1st mo. 8th.*—I am much pleased by thy report of thy literary occupations. Every object connected with scriptural study and research is more than ever a matter of

interest and importance with me. I have of late thought much and very seriously on a Bible with notes, geographical, historical, elucidatory and critical, for the reading of our own Society. I cannot but believe that the talent requisite for such a work might be found within our own borders; and that, if it be judiciously accomplished, it might be made interesting and instructive, and in many respects useful, to Friends generally. Were such a thing ever to meet with a cordial reception among Friends in America, it is not easy to calculate on the good that might arise from it.

I have been endeavouring to put together some remarks on slavery as connected with the doctrine and practice of the early Christians; but I find myself at a loss for one item of information which seems indispensable to a general and correct view of the subject—the state of civil society in Asia—at Corinth and in Phrygia—at the time of the first introduction of Christianity into those parts. I suppose the law and practice of slavery in those remote provinces were in some respects different from what they were at Rome; and not exactly the same at that period as in the times of the ancient Greek historians. If ever I finish it—and it is more adapted to the opinion and feeling of the people of Carolina and Georgia than of this country—and thou shouldest think it fit to see the light, I have thought of dubbing it with the title of "Philemon and Onesimus."

To this letter he received the following reply:—

FROM J. J. GURNEY.

Being very much engaged in preparing for a long absence from my peaceful and interesting home, I know not that I should have written to thee so early, had I not wished to encourage thee in thy literary career, which I warmly approve. I much like the idea of "Philemon and Onesimus,"* and am convinced that thou art far more competent to such a task than almost anybody in our Society. I fear I cannot recommend

* This was never published.

thee to any work on the state of Greece, Macedonia, or Lesser Asia, at the time of the Apostle Paul. I question whether there is any existing document which throws so much light on the subject as the book of Acts itself; but I think thou wilt find in commentaries on that book some useful hints as to where information may be obtained. I have ordered Paxton's "Illustration of Scripture," a book which I hear highly spoken of, as containing a large body of collateral information.

A biographical lexicon of the New Testament thou might, I think, get up without great difficulty; it is an excellent idea, and such a work would be very acceptable to our young people and many others.

With respect to a Bible with notes, it is a work which evidently requires an enlarged combination of effort. I think there are several individuals, besides our two selves, who might contribute in due season to such an undertaking. I would name, amongst others, thy brother Josiah, J. Candler, T. Maw, and Dr. Ash. I really begin to hope we may make something of it, ere very long. It would be the better way to take the New Testament first, as the most important, and the most within compass. While I cordially approve of thy literary labours, I trust they will never prevent thy more active engagements in the church.

Early in the Second Month William Forster again writes, in allusion to the visit to Ireland,

To J. J. GURNEY.

Whether I have a right apprehension or not of Eccles. ix. 4, "For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope," I not only think it a privilege, but I take comfort to myself in believing that I may be allowed to regard it as a token for good, that I enjoy some little capacity for sympathy with those who, baptized of the Lord for the service to which he is pleased to appoint them, are sent forth in his name to proclaim the gospel of his Son. There

is a course of discipline, and there are plunges into suffering and conflict, peculiar to such an exercise of faith; and possibly it may be no very large proportion of the believers in Christ who are fully apprized of the depth and extent of these conflicts. But there are some who have seen the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep, and who have cause to bless his holy name for the support He has vouchsafed unto them, under those dispensations in which He may have seen meet to instruct them to an understanding of the vanity of the help of man.

Thus I believe it to have been with thee, my beloved brother, and my joy and consolation in the Lord is very great on thy behalf; and very much is it to my strength and confirmation, that I can entertain such confidence for thee, in the aboundings of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ towards thee, and through thee towards his Church in those places to which He is about to send thee.

During the summer of this year (1827) William Forster was engaged in holding meetings for the inhabitants of some of the villages in the district of his own Monthly Meeting; and in the autumn he paid a visit to Friends in Suffolk and Hertfordshire. Of these labours, however, no particulars are preserved.

He was not of a robust constitution; and was not unfrequently confined to the house with illness. About this time neither his own health nor that of his beloved wife appears to have been very good. Yet he was able, at intervals, to pursue his biblical researches, and to make some progress in the work he had in hand. J. J. G. had returned from Ireland, and being about again to leave home on religious service in the North of England, W. F. writes :—

To J. J. GURNEY.

1828. *3rd mo. 25th.*—I hasten to express my thankfulness that thou art again constrained, in the love of Christ, to evince thy faithfulness to his cause, and that, in the power of the Spirit of the Lord, thou art strengthened to surrender thyself to his service. Thou hast had thy baptisms preparatory to this commission; and I cannot but anticipate for thee much enlargement in the love, the life, the hope and the joy of the gospel; and that, as it is a standing ordinance for the Israel of God of all generations, thou wilt have again to acknowledge, as thou hast often done, that the ox is not muzzled when he treadeth out the corn. "For our sakes no doubt this is written, that he that plougheth should plough in hope, and that he that thresheth should be partaker of his hope."

Treading out the corn, by the way, brings me to my biblical readings and extracts. I have been, within the last few days, employing myself on the third of Matthew, a chapter rich in allusion to eastern customs. I have lately met with a copy of Campbell; the book is new to me, and I think will be likely to afford me much valuable and useful instruction. I am reading Lardner's "Lives of the Apostles" with considerable interest; it is just the book to make me think. I met with a copy of "Benson on the Acts;" it meets my expectation on the external history of the first years of the Christian Church. Lardner makes allusion to it, and it is quoted as authority in other works. When I see thee I shall be glad to talk with thee about Lightfoot, Hammond, Bishop Pearce, and Macknight.

I have many questions to ask thee; and, as it may be long before I see thee, I will thank thee to give me thy opinion of the term of our Lord's ministry. I conclude thou inclines to the most generally received opinion of three years or thereabouts from his baptism to his crucifixion; and so do I. Though I do not consider it so fully determined by the text as I at first thought it was. I have lately met with a small book on the veracity and undesigned coincidence of the

gospels; it furnished a very agreeable First-day entertainment to Willy and me a few weeks ago:—"Blunt on the Veracity of the Gospels."

In our present situation, retired and almost cut off as we sometimes seem to be from intercourse with our Church, I regard it as evidence of membership in the body not to be lightly esteemed, that I can feel something approaching to Christian fellowship with any of those who are called abroad to labour in the word. But how little is it that those whom the Lord has set apart as vessels for his own use are able to believe that He is effecting his work within them by their baptisms into humiliation and suffering almost unto death. And how much are we apt, in such seasons of trial, to think the dispensations under which we are made to suffer, unlike everything we have known in earlier days! Could we discover exactly the same features in every baptism, they might not so fully answer the purpose. In the depth of our abasement we can comprehend neither the means nor the end. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Thus it is that we are brought first to trust, then to hope, and subsequently are made to rejoice, to give thanks, and to praise the name of our Redeemer, and to acknowledge his mercy, and truth, and power.

A week later he received an interesting reply, from which the following is extracted:—

FROM J. J. GURNEY.

I was very glad to hear that thou art making so much progress in thy interesting undertaking, which, I doubt not, will grow on thy heart as well as thy hands, and become to thee an increasingly important and delightful object. I heartily wish thee encouragement in it; thou hast much more general biblical reading in thee than I have. With regard to the merely critical part, I may, in the end, be a tolerably useful help; but, I am clearly of opinion that in thy proceeding comfortably with the work, it is desirable for thee to

be resolute in making thyself master of the Greek Testament; this, I doubt not, thou art doing by degrees.

In the Eighth Month of this year William Forster was engaged in a religious visit to South Wales, Herefordshire, and Worcestershire. Soon after his return from this journey he received the affecting intelligence of the serious illness of his sister Jane Forster, at Brighton.

10th mo. 9th.—Our letters by to-day's post bring us so discouraging an account of my beloved sister, as to induce me to think it best to go to-night. My heart is heavy and very sorrowful, and I do not feel in the strongest state of health. May it please our Heavenly Father to preserve me in a quiet, resigned, and trustful mind; and make me a support to my dear mother and sisters. It may please the Lord to raise up our dear sister from this state of extreme weakness, and restore her to those to whom she is so very dear. The possibility of this sometimes gives me a little hope, yet it is but little that I dare to indulge.

A few days later he writes from Tottenham:—

Our dear Jane expired about half-past twelve on Fifth-day morning. It was a moment of acute feeling to me. My dear wife felt it very severely. Willy hung upon my neck and wept. I immediately determined on coming to Tottenham; my mind was subdued, quiet, and stayed, but it was a low time; the scenes of my sister's dying hours passed rapidly before my imagination; and it was for a time like walking through the shadow of death. I was at Tottenham at a quarter-past eight.

On Second-day morning, dear J. and R. and my sister M. arrived from Kendal: our meeting was a time of poignant feeling to us all; but it was a comfort to my dearest mother to have all her children around her. Sorrow has brought us

near together; and a very sweetly uniting feeling has there been amongst us.

William Forster stayed at Tottenham till after the funeral of his sister, his wife having gone back to Bradpole, on account of the delicate health of her mother, whom they had left at their house. This affectionate parent had, from the time of their marriage, made their interests her own, and a strong attachment subsisted between them. Only a few days afterwards he received a hasty summons to return home, in consequence of her sudden death. Of this event he writes:

26th.—My beloved wife and myself went together to look at the remains of our beloved mother—we deeply felt her removal; but a holy, heavenly calm is over us, and we are encouraged to hope in the mercy of our Redeemer on behalf of her who is taken from us.

It was no wonder that the unlooked-for removal of two such precious links from the family chain, so soon one after the other, should cast a shade of sorrow over the little group at Bradpole, during the closing months of the year. Writing about this time to J. J. Gurney, who was then engaged in religious service in some of the midland counties, after alluding to these trials, which, "with all the true comfort and many alleviations afforded in the great mercy of the Saviour," were yet felt to be "a sore and heavy affliction," William Forster adds:

It will be a blank to me if these unexpected events should prevent my visit in Norfolk in the Twelfth or First Month, to which I have been looking, ever since I parted from dear Fowell and Hannah, with the anticipation of much pleasure and enjoyment.

I feel thee, my dear friend, most near to me, in much true, brotherly sympathy, and a very precious sense of that fellowship which is in the gospel of Christ Jesus our Lord. I take comfort in believing that thou art preserved in a lowly, watchful and dependent mind, and that the Lord is with thee in this exercise of faith and obedience, and that it will be blessed to thy own confirmation, and the help and comfort of others.

A variety of causes concurred in setting aside the contemplated visit to Earlham at the time proposed. The following extract from a letter received some time afterwards, alludes to it:—

FROM J. J. GURNEY.

It is quite a mortification to have thy visit to Norfolk thus put off; but I trust it is only put off, and that we shall have the real joy of seeing you here in the course of the next six weeks or two months. I have plenty of matters to talk over with thee. I wonder whether this will find thy dear brother J. with thee? May you be refreshed and comforted together; and, though clouds may be permitted in no slight measure to overcast the sky, may we, with the eye of faith, still behold the Sun of righteousness, who has abundant healing for us on his wings.

The Bible meetings, &c., passed off excellently; and our large party at Earlham was favoured, in no common degree, with the quieting and comforting influence of divine love. I think the effort never afforded me greater satisfaction. Fowell was, as usual, a bright ingredient in the party, and made an excellent speech at the meeting.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1829—1834.

During the period of six years comprised in the present chapter, William Forster did not travel much as a minister. Except a visit which he paid in Guernsey and Jersey in 1829, and one among Friends in Somersetshire, and parts adjacent, in 1831, he does not appear to have been liberated by his Monthly Meeting for any religious service from home. His ministerial labours *at* home, however, and in the limits of his own Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, as well as during his repeated attendance of the Yearly Meeting, though rarely alluded to by himself, were highly appreciated by others, and often spoken of as remarkably instructive, and attended with much power.

He was very fond of his rural retreat—his "green, flowery, sequestered nest, amongst the hills" of Dorsetshire, as Amelia Opie called it, when, "quite knocked up," she sought to restore her strength there, in the "sweet society of dear friends." Being much given to hospitality, he and his wife greatly enjoyed the visits of their friends; whilst those who had the privilege of being with them, under their own roof, could not fail to be both pleased and edified.

In his boyhood, William Forster had taken much pleasure in gardening, and he had now an opportunity of gratifying his taste for horticultural pursuits,

showing a good deal of skill in raising a variety of exotics, often from seed gathered by himself during his distant travels, and in attending to his flower-beds, pruning his fruit-trees, &c. Such employments he frequently found both healthful and congenial; but they were now merely his recreations. Much of his time, whether at home or abroad, was occupied for the benefit of others. He read a great deal, and devoted no inconsiderable share of attention to literary and philanthropic pursuits.

Writing to his absent friends, much as he loved them, was always a task to him. He often mourns over his constitutional reluctance to that kind of work, and deeply regrets that, by too much yielding to it, he deprived himself of the privilege of hearing from them as frequently as he wished. His correspondence with J. J. Gurney, however, was seldom long interrupted; and from this, in the general dearth of information relating to this period, we now and then gather a few particulars which throw an interesting light upon this comparatively secluded portion of his life. He had heard of his friends, being engaged in religious labour in the Midland Counties, and writes

To J. J. GURNEY.

1829. *4th mo. 17th. Bradpole.*—It is a real satisfaction to me to think of thee in the service of thy Lord, and to believe that He is giving thee authority to speak of his power, and mercy, and love, for the confirmation and refreshment of his heritage, and for the awakening and gathering of the transgressors and them that are of a worldly mind. Thy path must often have been in the way of deep waters; but thou canst more than many appreciate the kindness of our

Lord and Saviour towards thee in granting thee a part in this ministry, and that He has counted thee worthy of baptism into suffering for his great name's sake.

And when thou considers who they are that shall reign with Him in the dominion of his power, in that kingdom which He establishes in the hearts of his believing ones over all that is of the world, of the fall, and of the devil who occasioned the fall, and who they are that shall partake in all the heavenly blessings comprehended in the resurrection to life everlasting, I persuade myself that there are times in which thou art glad to discover anything approaching to an evidence of an interest in Christ, even if it should seem to consist in nothing more than an enlarged capacity to understand and to endure such suffering.

It seems remarkable how many servants are just now called into the field. I rejoice in it, and have strong confidence that their labours will not be in vain.

The Yearly Meeting was now approaching; and it proved to be a time of more than ordinary importance. Though four years had elapsed since William Forster's return from the United States of America, he had maintained a lively interest in the progress of events among Friends in that country. When, at the preceding Yearly Meeting, official information was received that a separation had actually taken place among them, and that the followers of Elias Hicks had effected a distinct organization, he felt deeply for the affliction of his brethren. And when now, the Yearly Meeting in London, as one of the family of Yearly Meetings, felt itself called upon to take a decided step in disclaiming all connection with the seceders, a mind like his could not fail to be keenly alive to the most conflicting feelings. But, whilst on the one hand he was brought into deep sorrow on account of many who had "erred from the faith"—and

he earnestly longed that they might be "restored in the spirit of meekness"—it was cause for thankfulness to him, on the other, that so large a number of those among whom he had laboured so long, in all the Yearly Meetings on the American continent, had been preserved faithful in their allegiance to Christ and his cause. Though not present himself, he deeply felt the painfulness of the occasion; and it could not but be matter of rejoicing to him, at the same time, that his own Yearly Meeting was enabled, at such a juncture, to deliberate on a question of so much importance in perfect harmony, and to issue the following declaration of its faith in our blessed Redeemer, with entire unanimity*:—

"This meeting has been introduced into a feeling of much sympathy and brotherly love for our brethren on the American continent. We have heard, with deep concern and sorrow, of the close trials to which they have been subjected, by the diffusion of anti-Christian doctrines among them; and we consider it to be a duty to disclaim, and we hereby do disclaim, all connection, as a religious Society, with any meetings for the purpose of worship or discipline, which have been established, or which are upheld, by those who have embraced such anti-Christian doctrines.

And in order to prevent any misapprehension as to our views, we feel ourselves called upon, at this time, to avow our belief in the inspiration and divine authority of the Old and New Testament.

We further believe, that the promise made after the transgression of our first parents, in the consequence of whose fall all the posterity of Adam are involved, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, and the declaration unto Abraham, 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,' had a direct reference to the

* Similar declarations were issued by all the Yearly Meetings in America.

coming in the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him, also, did the prophet Isaiah bear testimony, when he declared, 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.' And again, the same prophet spoke of Him when he said, 'Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted; but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.' The same blessed Redeemer is emphatically denominated by the prophet Jeremiah, 'THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'

At that period, and in that miraculous manner, which God in his perfect wisdom saw fit, the promised Messiah appeared personally upon earth, when 'He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.' He 'was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' Having finished the work which was given Him to do, He gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God. He tasted death for every man. 'He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' 'We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.' He passed into the heavens, and being the brightness of the glory of God, 'and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;' and ever liveth to make intercession for us.

It is by the Lord Jesus Christ that the world will be judged in righteousness. He is 'the mediator of the new covenant;'—'the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and

he is before all things, and by him all things consist.' 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:' and to Him did the Evangelist bear testimony when he said, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.' He 'was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.'

Our blessed Lord Himself spoke of his perpetual dominion and power in his church, when He said, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life:' and, when describing the spiritual food which He bestoweth on the true believers, He declared, 'I am the bread of life: he that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.' He spoke also of his saving grace, bestowed on those who come in faith unto Him, when He said, 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.'

Our religious Society, from its earliest establishment to the present day, has received these most important doctrines of Holy Scripture in their plain and obvious acceptation; and we do not acknowledge as in fellowship with us, as a Christian community, any body of religious professors which does not thus accept them, or which openly receives or accredits as ministers, those who attempt to invalidate any of these doctrines which we esteem as essential parts of the Christian religion.

It is the earnest desire of this meeting, that all who profess our name, may so live, and so walk before God, as that they may know these sacred truths to be blessed to them individually. We desire that, as the mere profession of sound Christian doctrine will not avail to the salvation of the soul, all may attain to a living, efficacious faith, which, through the power of the Holy Ghost, bringeth forth fruit unto holiness; the end whereof is everlasting life through Jesus Christ our

Lord. 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.'"

Walking humbly with his God, the biblical investigation and research into which William Forster had been led for some years past, prompted, in the first instance, very much by Christian interest and love towards his American brethren, had greatly tended to confirm his faith in "the efficacy of the Atonement of Christ, and in the reality of the work of the Holy Spirit." "The comfort of that quiet," he said, "in which my mind is settled in relation to these great truths is most satisfactory to me. 'He that believeth, entereth into rest;' and there is no rest, in this state of trial, like the rest of faith." It is no wonder that he should so earnestly long that all who bear the name of Friends everywhere, and all the sons and daughters of men, should be brought to enjoy the same "rest."

Later in the year he again writes

To J. J. GURNEY.

8th mo. 14th. Bradpole.—Within the last few weeks I have been much given up to the selecting and transcribing of annotations and illustrations. The employment is become increasingly interesting to me. As I proceed, I hope and believe, the labour will lessen, and I shall gain some confidence in my own judgment. On the eighth of Matthew, the chapter on which I have spent most time, I have ninety notes; in many instances they will admit of abridgment. I hope to use the greatest diligence until I have gone through the book of Matthew. I consider my collection of biblical books well chosen. I hardly know whether I had better meddle with Pool's "Synopsis," and such books as Kuinoel and others of the German Biblical writers.

In his almost isolated local habitation, remote from many of his friends, his heart was not contracted; he was accustomed to take a wide range among "the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ," and the good of his fellow-men. The operations of the Bible Society, missionary labours of every kind and everywhere, the promotion of universal peace, and not less so the absorbing question of negro slavery, all continued to claim his serious attention. As it regards the latter, the anti-Christian system still prevailed in the West Indies, under British rule, and he writes to his brother:—

To JOSIAH FORSTER.

1830. *4th mo. 7th.*—I think it is to be feared that the cause of humanity has in some degree suffered by its friends appearing so much to have forsaken the moral and Christian grounds on which it was originally taken up by Friends and other people, and on which the slave-trade itself was abolished; and seeming almost exclusively to confine themselves to the impolicy of the system.

Probably by reverting to the wickedness and immorality, and cruelty of the oppression, and pressing it upon the consciences of the people, with the strength of argument which that view of the subject cannot fail to afford, more good may now be effected than people may generally suppose. It should be acknowledged that ten years have not yet elapsed, scarcely so much as seven, since it first became a great national question. Considering how many influential people have almost their whole property involved in the evil of slave-holding, I do not think we ought to be so vastly surprised that it has not made more way in the Legislature, but rather to be glad and encouraged that so much feeling has been awakened and is still alive on the subject.

With reference to the free coloured people in America he writes, a little later,—

To THE SAME.

6th mo. 21st.—Coloured people are very apt to congregate in towns; and though some of them, perhaps quite as many of them as one might expect, do well, yet a large number of them are not very fond of work, and others are improvident, and no doubt intemperate too. And when they are reduced to distress, either by the severity of the winter, or when from any other cause work is scarce, of course they draw pretty heavily upon the resources of their industrious and frugal neighbours. With this view of the case, one cannot very much wonder that they should wish to guard against the heavy expense that so large and increasing a population of that class of the inhabitants may be liable to bring upon the towns. I thought I saw so much of the evil resulting both to themselves and the lower class of the whites —and the upper classes too—from this preference to town rather than country life, that on several occasions I did my best to impress Friends with the apprehension I entertained that they could not more effectually promote their improvement than by offering them some encouragement to a life of husbandry. Could they happily be brought to adopt the change, I cannot but think they would be much more likely to provide comfortably for themselves and their families, be less in the way of temptation themselves, and less of a temptation to others. By attaining to something approaching to general respectability of character, one of the great objections to the manumission of slaves would be removed.

William Forster was not in the practice of frequently recording his personal experience, or what related to the history of his inner life. The following memoranda are, on that account, the more interesting and valuable, as indications of what was ordinarily much concealed.

3rd mo. 1st.—Our meeting was to me this morning a time of much conflict, and fear. In the afternoon I was

cheered by a gleam of hope, and enlivened in spirit, as I thought I could perceive some opening towards a field of labour in the service of the gospel of Christ. O! what a favour should I think it once more to be set at liberty under the influence of the divine anointing; and strengthened by the wisdom and power of the Spirit of God to preach the word of life.

13th.—My heart has been made very tender this evening, and my spirit has worshipped in reverent thanksgiving before the Lord in consideration of my many, manifold temporal and domestic blessings—a beloved and loving wife, kind, sensible and pious—a dutiful and promising child—a comfortable home, with many indulgences—food and raiment to my heart's content—my garden and my books—many affectionate and truly estimable friends. So full is my cup, I may well tremble lest, for my manifold demerits, the corruptions of my nature, and the transgressions of my earlier and latter years, it should please the Lord to visit me with adversity; lest He make display of his wisdom and power in the administration of judgment. O! that I may, with increasing watchfulness and humility, and a more entire devotedness of heart, serve Him in all the ways of his commandments; that I may industriously employ my time and talents in submission to his will, and to the hononr of his name, and more diligently cultivate a dependent, prayerful habit of mind, and a temper gentle, kind, meek and lowly.

23rd.—The anniversary of this day brings with it considerations and associations calculated to produce much thoughtfulness and deep feeling. I am now entering upon another year of my earthly existence.

In the timidity of my nature I shrink from the apprehension of the portion of suffering which in one way or other may be appointed me. If it should please my gracious Lord and Saviour to call for any part of it in the way of public religious service, it is very earnestly my desire that I may cherish the measure of faith, however small, with which He may be pleased to quicken me; and in entire resignation offer up myself to his disposal. But should He appoint me

my lot in greater seclusion, and exercise my faith and fidelity to Him by conflict, temptation, and adversity, O that patience may have her perfect work—that every trial and every chastisement may have the effect of more entirely weaning my heart from earthly things; and that, through the power of His Spirit working upon me, I may be sanctified unto Him, and prepared for an inheritance with the saints in light at the end of days.

3rd mo. 28th.—Our meetings to-day were both of them times of some suffering to me. The hand of the Lord was upon me, I trust, for chastening and cleansing; and I thought with much feeling of our Lord's description of the publican, not daring to lift up his eyes towards heaven. In our reading with the family in the evening in Ezekiel xxxiv., I felt in some degree comforted and refreshed; and a peculiar unction seemed to rest on these words: "I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God."

4th mo. 1st.—I ventured to express a few sentences in our week-day meeting this morning; and I trust the love of Christ prevailed over the minds of most, if not all, the little company assembled; and we sat together a while under its contriting influence.

In the course of the day I was engaged once more to make a fresh offering of myself to the service of the Lord. Can I believe that He will ever again condescend to sanctify the vessel, and make use of it in his house? Not that I desire a renewal of the gifts of the Spirit that I may by them be distinguished above my brethren, or that I may be made popular in advocating the cause of the Gospel of Christ. But I long for evidence of divine acceptance, and that in some small measure I may be rendered instrumental in the furtherance of the Lord's purposes of mercy and love amongst men.

6th mo. 28th.—I trust it was given me to rejoice in a renewed visitation of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to my own soul, and to some others also in our meeting this evening. And I ventured to speak of that which was brought before me. My heart was unexpectedly enlarged and made very tender before the Lord. May I be allowed

to accept it as a token that the anointing oil is not utterly withdrawn.

1831. *1st mo. 2nd.*—The commencement of a new year has brought me to much serious thoughtfulness. This afternoon, especially, on my way to meeting, I received some instruction, and was quickened in spirit in thinking of the purport of 1 Pet. ii. 17, especially on those words, "the time of your sojourning." I have thought much of our friends at Norwich to-day assembled on the occasion of the burial of our beloved and honoured friend Joseph Gurney.

4th.—I was in Bridport yesterday, and again this evening, at the committee of the Association. I spoke my mind decidedly, but I trust temperately, against the introduction of some books into the library which I thought of a sceptical tendency.

5th.—A more internally tranquil day and evening than has frequently been my experience of late; closed the evening by reading "Barrow on Contentment," to my instruction and reproof.

6th.—At meeting this morning, I was sensible of some feeling of power in speaking on the fear of God.

7th.—A happy afternoon; but a dull, unprofitable evening —much heaviness of flesh and spirit.

9th.—In my silent exercise at meeting this morning, I was comforted, and my faith was strengthened whilst meditating on the preciousness of Christ; and I had some serious impressions of the spirituality of the divine law.

10th.—At home most of the day; carried out blankets to some of our poor neighbours. In the evening, at the general meeting of the Association, there was a large number of the young people, which was to me a particularly interesting object.

11th.—Much engaged with the poor; visiting them and carrying out blankets.

16th.—Our reading this evening was more bright than some such opportunities; we had an instructive sermon of Venn's on the shortness of time, and the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah was made a rich enjoyment of promise and hope to me.

20th.—Much oppressed this morning by heavy burdens of care and anxiety. Dear Willy read to me in Lyttleton's "Conversion of St. Paul." At meeting I was rather unusually enlarged in expression. In speaking of the consolations of religion, my faith was strengthened in the love and faithfulness of our Redeemer.

About this time he received the following letter

FROM J. J. GURNEY.

I am just now preparing for a very small volume, say a pamphlet, on the subject of the Sabbath, its history, authority, and use. Pray let me have thy thoughts on this subject as fully as thou canst. I question whether my labour will come to anything. My dearest uncle's death has been a great blow to me. He was a most precious friend, father, and counsellor to me, and we were much united in sentiment as well as affection. I miss him at meeting, I miss him at the bank, I miss him in public charities. I often used to think that I could scarcely bear to be without him. But now it must be so, and I find I can and do bear it, and get on better than I expected in a course increasingly solitary. I suppose I grow a little callous as years roll on; and through all there is a power which makes hard things easy, and crooked things straight, to the weak and often faltering followers of our invincible Conqueror. I have been at times much discomforted, and my faith and patience as much tried as often falls to my lot; however, I can acknowledge that whatever I suffer I deserve, that whatever I enjoy is of mercy. How art thou prospering? How goes on the commentary? How goes on W.'s education? I entreat thee not to delay giving me a full account of you. I do not know that I ever felt a closer attachment to our principles. The perfection of religion appears to me to be consistent Quakerism on an evangelical foundation, and I believe it will be well for us carefully to guard both the basis and the building. Truly our time is short, and we must work while it is called to-day. O that every passing

hour were more simply devoted to Him whom it is our highest privilege to worship and serve!

To this he replies, in allusion to the death of Joseph Gurney, &c.:—

To J. J. GURNEY.

3rd mo. 7th. Bradpole.—I would fain write thee a long letter of my hearty love, and affectionate brotherly sympathy; and I could say much before I should have told thee all that I have felt for thee, and many others in the event that has left such a chasm in your family circle, in your meeting, and in our Society at large. I think I shall hardly realize the death of our beloved and honoured friend until I have been at Norwich, and attended another Yearly Meeting. But I can imagine what it must be to thee, and how much thou must miss him in thy every-day life, and in thy religious engagements at home. To me his removal from us has had something of an awakening effect. I knew him and looked up to him as a Father in the church, more than five-and-twenty years ago. Of those who were then contemporary with him scarcely one is now alive; it makes me feel how time is running on; and, in thinking how few of those whom I have regarded as Elders in the truth are left amongst us, I confess it makes me very low, in the consideration how little I am, or can ever expect to be to others, what they were to me. Whilst in reference to our beloved friend, thy uncle, all has been ascribed to that grace by which he was what he was, we may speak fully and in unqualified terms of his humility, and simplicity, and charity—his faith and obedience—his jealousy over himself, and his tenderness towards others. And, whilst led along in the path of self-denial, with such remarkable consistency of character as to give him great place among his brethren, yet he was never the man who lorded it over the heritage; nor did he ever seem to lose a sense of his own discipleship, whilst ministering to the instruction and strength of others. As a servant

of the Lord, in the gospel of Christ, his ministry was remarkable for the evidence that it carried with it that it was exercised in the fear of God, apart from all view to popularity. His faithfulness in his gift in later life, and his visits to Friends, will long be remembered by many; and thy aunt's bearing him company in his travels was to the comfort of Friends wherever they went. I have a very pleasant impression of the good influence that she carried with her on those occasions.

I am pleased to find that thou art at work on the "Sabbath," and shall be glad to see what thou hast written. I am not going to tell thee how low I have been lately; I never say much about it; I only wish I could take Fowell's advice and strive more earnestly against it. Dear Willy is my constant object and most delightful companion; so much so that I had need watch lest I should keep him at home for our own comfort, to his disadvantage.

Of his visits to Friends in Somersetshire and parts adjacent which occurred at the close of this year, no account has been met with. On his return from this engagement he resumed his home pursuits, and did not feel it required of him to relinquish them to attend the ensuing Yearly Meeting. He acknowledges an account of its proceedings in the following letter:—

To J. J. GURNEY.

1832. *6th mo. 30th. Bradpole.*—Many thanks for thy account of the Yearly Meeting. I had felt pretty well satisfied with not having gone to town until I heard of the Conference which took place after the Yearly Meeting. I will not at all doubt Friends having done the right thing in the conclusion they came to. The introduction into the Society of the consideration of the condition of the heathen has not, I believe, done us much harm, and it may have furnished to some of us a practical comment on 1 Cor. iv. 7—

"For who maketh thee to differ from another; and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" It will not, I believe, very lightly pass away. Perhaps it may be best to let the subject rest entirely for the present; but I can hardly help thinking that it will turn up again some day, and be brought upon us with greater weight and power, and possibly be made the means of quickening us to a more lively zeal and greater self-denying devotedness to the cause of Christ.

Some reverent acknowledgment to the value and importance of that portion of the word of divine inspiration—unfulfilled prophecy—and some short allusion to the comfort and hope granted us by the promise contained in the books of the Prophets, of better and brighter days to the Church than we have hitherto seen, and of a larger and more extensive diffusion throughout the world of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus—some such views have not unfrequently been to me as a brook by the way, and helped me to some moments of most delightful anticipation and spiritual enjoyment.

I dare say you have read the "Saturday Evening." I was very much taken by passages in some of the papers, particularly by that bearing on experimental and practical religion, and that on the material universe. I was just on the point of transcribing a paragraph to send thee at Manchester, on the wisdom of God in employing human agency for the inculcation of divine truth. It might have served to convince thee that I was not altogether lacking in sympathy and fellowship with thee in thy labours in the work of the Lord. The author seems to have much the view of the subject which we are apt to entertain,—that those who are set apart to the work of the ministry of the Gospel are often, and it may be more than other men, plunged into the depth of their own helplessness and corruptions, that they may speak of the hatefulness and guilt of sin, and be prepared experimentally to magnify that grace in which Almighty God has provided the means of pardon and redemption through his only begotten Son, our

High Priest and hope of glory. Sometimes I am permitted to catch a glimpse of the blessedness of those who are partakers of the sprinkling of that blood which cleanseth from all sin; and often do I sigh for an increase of that faith by which I might be enabled to trust in Him more implicitly, to lean upon Him as the means of spiritual support, and to draw my every-day supplies from Him, the source of life, the fountain of living waters.

I have been much interested in what I have heard of thy concern and endeavour for the instruction of young Friends in the evidences of Christianity. I like the plan of thy new work, and hope it will obtain a very extensive circulation. My reading within the last few months has been much on such subjects. Hast thou seen Bennett's "Antidote to Infidelity?" It is a small thing, but worth looking at. The first volume is marked by great originality; but the author's style is not exactly to my taste. His allusion to our Society, in the discourse entitled "Christianity no Priestcraft," is apt and well adapted to his purpose.

Alluding to the death of Rachel Fowler, he again writes

To J. J. Gurney.

1833. *9th mo. 10th.*—I was very much with you in spirit as we sat in the week-day meeting on Fourth-day at Wellington; and thought that I had some perception, however feebly it might be, of those consolations with which I could not doubt that you were abundantly comforted of God, in being enabled, for a short time, to forget yourselves and the scenes of suffering and distress of body of which you had so recently been witnesses, and with reverent thanksgiving to offer spiritual worship to Him who had redeemed to Himself our beloved friend, carried her safely through all her tribulations, and at length, as a shock of corn fully ripe, gathered her to an everlasting abiding place, in the presence of his glory.

How exceeding rich in all that constitutes the joy and

excellency of our holy religion is that precious word of assurance—"He shall go no more out!" To those who die in the Lord, we may be very sure that there is no more falling away, no more of that under which the most advanced Christian is at times made to groan, being burthened. But, delivered from the body in which we have to suffer under a sense of the evil and bitterness of sin, the children of the Lord, without intermission to their communion with Him, and without alloy to their peace and joy, are in the society of multitudes more numerous than man can number, happy and blessed as themselves, established before Him for ever. Such gleams as these from the Sun of Righteousness, as they break upon us in the course of our pilgrimage, may be regarded as strong and conclusive evidence of the reality and divine origin of the doctrine of the New Testament, and are, in the abounding of that grace by which we are called to eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord, vouchsafed in moments of peculiar favour for the strengthening of our faith, and ought to have the effect of quickening us to more fervent aspirations for complete purification from sin through the power of the Holy Ghost.

On the 28th of the Eighth Month this year a Bill for the Total Abolition of Slavery in the British colonies received the Royal assent—an event which caused a feeling of general rejoicing.*

The Act provided that slavery should entirely cease in the colonies of Great Britain on the first of the Eighth Month, 1835. The measure almost took the nation by surprise; and, in the language of the next Yearly Meeting, it might "be truly said to have been hastened in the Lord's time—such were the singular providences brought to bear upon the public feeling, and upon the legislature, that none could point to the result as arising from their individual

* See "Memoirs of Sir Thomas Fowler Buxton."

efforts; and the lesson was afresh sealed upon the Christian mind, that the Lord ruleth among the children of men." William Forster had, from his youth, felt so deeply on account of the cruel wrongs of the African race, that he could not but heartily unite with his brethren in the feeling of thankfulness to God, "that it had pleased Him to incline the hearts of the rulers of the nation to this act of justice and mercy."

The following letter affords an interesting illustration of the depth and scope of his mind:—

To J. J. GURNEY.

1834. *2nd mo. 28th.*—My brother sent me thy addenda to the "Peculiarities," with other papers, that I was to look over before he came. I should on many accounts have prized the opportunity of going with thee into many of the topics on which thou hast written, particularly on the Universality of the Light of Christ in the Conscience, and on Teaching, &c. I am much more of an old-fashioned Quaker than many take me to be; and my increasing conviction of my need of an interest in the personal mediation of Him who gave Himself for us (O that I had more of an abiding hope that it was indeed for me!), does not by any means lessen my sense of the necessity of the help of the Holy Spirit, from the very beginning to the end of the work of God in the soul of man. From our earliest awakening, to the complete sanctification of the most advanced believer, every step in the right way of the Lord must be under his guidance; and for every grace we must acknowledge ourselves indebted to his immediate influence.

Perhaps my deep feeling of the blessedness of the knowledge of Christ crucified, and the beauty and excellency of the Christian religion, its admirable adaptation to the fallen state of man, and the effects which have seemed to result from its introduction and extension over the world, and at

the same time observing so little of the fruits of the Spirit where Christ has not been preached, may have induced me to place an undue estimate on instrumental means, and made me too earnest to ascertain the existing circumstances of unenlightened nations, rather than simply to leave them to the love and mercy of Him who is incomprehensibly wise and just in all his ways. I shall, I dare say, value thy observations on the second of Romans; it is most apposite to the case, and ought to make us quiet, and to satisfy all our anxieties. We are now going through the Epistle in our family reading; it is always fresh and new to me—a rich mine of evangelical truth; and the deeper we go the more abundant and precious is the ore.

I have more than a mere curiosity to attend thy lecture meetings; I imagine that I should be deeply interested by them. I thought it rather an odd coincidence, and I believe I never told thee of it, that, just at the time thou first appointed such meetings in the north, I was often thinking of the desirableness of some such mode of instruction, by way of fortifying the educated and inquiring, against the subtle insinuations of a sceptical and infidel spirit. I cannot doubt its being thy calling, though at present we see but little appearance of the gift being dispensed to others; and as thou art led to it, I hope thou wilt not forbear to give thyself up freely to the exercise of it. I have sometimes thought that the less they were made meetings for worship, the more, perhaps, the difficulties of some friends would be obviated. As it is to be presumed that the lectures will always be more or less the result of study and reflection, I see no reason why a Friend on such an occasion should not speak from notes, or read a written discourse.

Would it be too much for thee, some day when thou art in the mind for it, to give me an outline of what thou considers a full course? Dost thou dwell much on natural theology? It might be made very interesting and useful on such occasions, not merely by adducing it for its own legitimate purpose, but by showing what it is not. It is remarkable, with the book of nature and providence open

before them, how imperfect and confused have been the ideas of God and his attributes entertained by those upon whom the light of external revelation has not broken forth. And how little of that which is implied by the fear of God (which we must regard as one of the most comprehensive terms of Holy Scripture), in its influence upon the affections and appetites in every-day life, seems to have had place upon the minds of many of those who have the most deeply investigated the laws by which He governs the material universe. And such men must have had many opportunities of beholding the glorious display of his wisdom and goodness, hidden from the eyes of men of smaller capacity and less cultivated minds. Nor does his ever-watchful providence, clearly as it is manifested in all his works, in every change of season, and in every place, appear to lead to a daily dependence and habitual trust in his fatherly care and protection, in those who are destitute of the knowledge of his love and mercy in Christ Jesus.

I was lately looking over those portions of Scripture which declare the power and glory of the Divine Being, as the creator and upholder of all things, visible and invisible, and was much struck with their fulness and beauty, and overpowered by a sense of their grandeur. What can exceed Nehemiah ix. 6?—"Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee."

Thou must find the internal evidences of the Christian religion a delightful theme; they so fully declare the wisdom, holiness, justice, and mercy of the Lord, that to every teachable mind they must be indisputably convincing that the revelation is from on high. The law of Christian morality, and the fruits of the Spirit, how large and diversified a range they must afford thee! Hast thou seen Professor Sedgwick's "Cambridge Discourses," lately published in a small volume? It is just come into my hands; I have not read

every page, but quite enough to be pleased with it. I wish thou wouldst read what he says upon natural theology, geology, moral sense, &c. I would make thee a few extracts if I had room for them.

Hast thou been writing anything new for the Peace Society? I am afraid we shall let this golden opportunity, of almost univeral peace throughout the civilized world, pass away without doing all that we might in spreading the knowledge of pacific principles, based on the plain and unequivocal injunctions of our great Lawgiver. By every means, direct and indirect, to promote the brotherhood of nations, is a department in the wide field of political economy which might advantageously bring into action many of the dormant energies of every enlightened Christian. I must beg thee to let me have some of this tract for distribution. The Peace Society cut such a sorry figure at its last anniversary, that one cannot but be disheartened about it. I think I know where to borrow the "Amethyst," and I shall make a point of reading thy paper.

Has it ever occurred to thee whether thou could not, in a small compass, bring prominently into view the practical application of the doctrine of atonement in connexion with the offices and work of the Holy Spirit, as professed by Friends, so as to meet the wishes of all parties among us, if we must use that hateful word. Something of the sort, done as I think thou wouldst do it, might have the effect of gathering and uniting us. It is in vain for us to look for unity out of, or distinct from, the fulness of Christ, and a decided acknowledgment of his power and Godhead, his mediation with the Father, and, as He is declared to be, our peace, our reconciliation, our only refuge, and especially as the medium through whom we obtain the forgiveness of sins. If ever we enjoy Christian fellowship, this must be the bond of it; and upon this we can never doubt but the Holy Spirit will descend with powerfully transforming and renewing influence. Much and deeply as I am at times cast down in considering our present state, I cannot but reverently trust that, such is the merciful kindness and forbearance of our

heavenly Father, during all these storms of agitation, He will watch over his frail and fallible children for good; and when they shall have subsided—and who will say that it will not be so, even during their continuance?—a revival of practical godliness will be brought about in the Society, such as has been but little apparent of later years; and that the testimonies of truth, minor and major, will find their due place, even in greater dignity and purity. Though *hors de combat* myself, I cannot but rejoice that thou art found worthy to be employed in that which of all others we must believe to be supereminently the work of the Lord; and that it is graciously given thee, in his love and power, to labour for the gathering and strengthening of his children. And I have no doubt He does at times richly comfort thee with that hope and those consolations which I know to be above all things precious to thy soul. Dost thou really believe He will ever call me into his service again?

I hope you all take satisfaction in Fowell's new objects:* nothing can be more interesting; and I am sure we ought to do all we can to render him help in so great and good a work. I do not know the course of proceeding he proposes to himself; but, let it be brought before the nation in whatever form it may, I think it cannot but be the means of leading the world to review one of the dark, and to me, most humiliating pages of the history of Christendom. Full reparation is out of the question; but we may hope it will lead to the inquiry into what can be done for the help and protection of the remnant—and alas! in many instances how small is the remnant—of those nations and tribes who have been degraded and oppressed, and all but exterminated, by the encroachments of our colonies.

I wish to know more about thy work on "Habit;" I fancy I shall like it; the subject is large and wide. I have long thought thou might do a good work in giving to the world thy views on a liberal education, conducted on Christian

* This has reference to an "Inquiry into the Condition and Treatment of the Aboriginal Tribes in the British Colonies." See Memoirs of Sir T. F. Buxton.

principles. Canst thou not say a word or two on the right cultivation of taste, and on the amazing prostitution and waste of intellectual talent, even in the Christian world; on recreation and amusement, and the duty of parents to make the youth of their children as happy and joyous as the restraints of religion will allow?

Towards the close of the year, he writes, with special reference to his friend's recent publication,

To J. J. GURNEY.

12th mo. 22nd.—We shall have no contest for the county of Dorset; and, our part of the parish of Bradpole not being included within the borough of Bridport, I have no vote for the town. Therefore, I am happy to say that I am out of the way of the excitement and strife which seem so general on every hand. But I have not been backward in declaring my determination not to vote for any candidate who will not come under engagement, both for himself and his committee, not to open public-houses, or give any strong drink on the occasion. The practice, I am sorry to say, is so general, that if I adhere to this resolution it is very doubtful whether I shall ever exercise my right of suffrage again. If the friends of morality and order would adopt the same course, I do not believe it would be long before something effectual would be done towards restraining the vice and intemperance which an election is almost sure to produce.

Many thanks for thy little book; I think it is very valuable, and would encourage thee to a large and cheap edition. I am glad to see that, whilst writing on the Love of God, thou hast been enabled to hold the balance with so much of an even hand, and not omitted the mention of his justice and holiness: the last chapter pleases me much. Couldst thou have given a distinct paragraph in thy clearest, strongest language, on the guilt and hatefulness of war, I think it would have made it more to my mind. I see that the subject is hinted at in several places; but feeling as I do that we ought

to leave no opportunity unemployed of entering our protest against this abomination, I should have been glad, that in a work not professedly a "Friends' Book," it might have been made to appear that we need no other instrumentality than the application and the following out of that principle of "love to man," as thou hast stated it, to bring to pass all the moral, social, and national blessings foreseen by the prophets, and so decidedly spoken of by them as constituting, in part, the glory of the latter days. Few subjects have lately had more of my deepest feeling and thoughtfulness. In thinking of it, as I often do, I am so much overwhelmed with a sense of the sinfulness of war, and its many contingencies, that it goes hard with me to reconcile myself to what appear to me the unchristian views that have been entertained by many good men on the subject. O, had we this love, genuine from the inexhaustible source of the Spirit's fulness, what would it not effect amongst us! What forbearance and perseverance in entreaty and persuasion! What forgiveness of injuries! What a carrying out of all the righteousness of the Lamb into our everyday intercourse, our civil concerns, and national politics! What prayer would there be to God that He would help us to settle our disputes without recourse to violent measures; and that He would preserve us from everything liable to interrupt the peaceable harmony of his government among men!

Wouldst thou think it worth while to consider whether thou couldst insert a word or two to describe a little more fully the work of the ministry as exercised in the earliest ages of the Church, and as it ever has been exercised by those whom the Lord has set apart for his services; as the effect of his love enlarging the hearts of his servants, bringing them into sympathy with the condition of the people, and, in that love which is originated under the immediate influences of the Holy Ghost, making them willing to spend and be spent for the spiritual and eternal good of their fellow-creatures? Thou wilt find a beautiful illustration of the blessing of Christian fellowship, between good men widely differing in

religious opinion, in page 233 of "Venn's Life and Correspondence,"* lately published.

* "Twenty-five years ago, I was certain I should be able to reconcile the Holy Scriptures in all their parts, and be able to pray without distraction. Now, I wait for the light of eternity, and the perfection of holiness, in order that I may know everything as I ought to know.

"True holiness is quite of another character than we, for a long time, in any degree conceive. It is not serving God without defect, but with deep self-abasement—with astonishment at His infinite condescension and love manifested to sinners—to ungodly enemies, and men who, in their best estate on earth, are exceedingly vile. It is pleasing to consider how we are all led into this point, however we may differ in others; and, were it not for the demon of controversy, and a hurry of employment, which leaves no time for self-knowledge, or devout meditation on the Oracles of God, I am persuaded we should every one be so grounded in this matter, that bystanders would no longer reproach us for our divisions."—*Venn's Life, &c.*

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LAST THREE YEARS AT BRADPOLE.

1835—1837.

In the spring of 1835, William Forster paid a religious visit to friends in Cornwall, and some parts of Devonshire, respecting which, however, we possess no information beyond the record of his Monthly Meeting. This appears to have been the only service of the kind in which he was engaged during the last years of his residence at Bradpole. The change was great, from a life of long continued and almost incessant itinerant labours for the advancement of the cause of Christ, both in his own country and in the vast regions of the American continent, to a protracted season of comparative repose, rarely interrupted by a call to go forth in the service of his Lord, beyond the range of his own Quarterly Meeting. But with his views of the ministry of the Gospel of Christ, he could not undertake any "missionary labours" from home, without a special call from the Great Head of the Church, and the fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit. When these were withheld he felt it to be his duty to abide in the tent. And, as in years past, whilst labouring more abundantly in the great harvest-field, there had been much that was cheering and animating to his contemporaries, in his early dedication and unwearied self-sacrifice; so now there was, perhaps, an example not less valuable

to them, in his willingness patiently to endure than in his former diligence in actively fulfilling the will of his God.

The Lord's ways are not as our ways, and He was now disciplining his servant, it may be, for all that was yet to follow. If there were seasons of discouragement, when faith was low, in which he was sometimes ready to look regretfully upon himself, as "*hors de combat*," and when he even longed to be "called into active service again," he was, nevertheless, willing, as "a good soldier of Christ," to wait patiently for the command of the "Captain of Salvation." Nor did he lay aside his armour, or relinquish the watch unto prayer. He was not robbed of his spirituality by indolence; his soul was kept alive unto God, and he was far from leading an inactive or an unuseful life; his labours of love amongst his neighbours continued as before—often unknown to others, but not unblessed by Him who seeth in secret.

He had placed his son at school, and he was now left alone with his "beloved, loving, kind, sensible, and pious wife." An occasional visit to their friends and relatives in Norfolk, at Tottenham, and in other parts, and some engagements in the service of the Church, not mentioned in the preceding chapter, had been strengthening and comforting both to themselves and to those among whom they had been. But most of their time had been spent at home. There William Forster pursued his usual occupations; and there, a minute as well as comprehensive re-investigation of the historical and scriptural grounds of his Christian faith, had rendered still more precious to him "the word of the truth of

the gospel," which he had so faithfully preached for many years, and upon which he continued to rest with unshaken confidence. Among the "fruits of solitude," which belong to this period of his life, are the following reflections :—

1. It is the one grand, legitimate object of all Holy Scripture to testify of Christ, to declare the grace of God in Christ Jesus. So in the New Testament, and especially in the preaching and epistles of the Apostles, it seems to be the great design of the Holy Spirit to set forth Christ crucified. Expunge the doctrine of the deity and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ from the writings of Paul, Peter, and John, and how miserably meagre and unsatisfactory they would be!

2. "He is just and having salvation." These are most precious words; the very unction of the Gospel seems to rest upon them. How very satisfactorily do they accord with that well-known evangelical testimony of Paul, "that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." The doctrines of the deity and atonement of our Lord seem to derive mutual confirmation one from the other. Why should the Son of God take upon Him the nature of man, and suffer the agonies of death, if it were not for an unutterably great and special purpose? And who, but an absolutely Divine being, could by the sacrifice of Himself atone for the transgression of man?

3. I have such a trembling sense of the inconceivable distance at which we are placed from the counsels of the Eternal mind, that perhaps I have need to watch against an overshrinking from such portions of revealed truth as have a tendency to involve in conflict and perplexity.

4. I am increasingly of the opinion that the more we have of the fear and love of God, and the nearer we approach to the character of spiritual worshippers, the more precious Christ will be to us as our propitiatory sacrifice, and in all his blessed mediatorial offices. If the atonement made by our Lord had a retrospective reference; and I cannot but believe that it had—for must we not believe that, with God, the past,

the present and the future, are one eternal NOW?—the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations were interested in the benefits secured to man by this one great sacrifice.

5. The subject of redemption through Christ is one so deeply mysterious that I can scarcely look to it but with unutterable awe and reverence, yet, at the same time, I trust, with gratitude and love. What an enlarged and comprehensive view of the doctrine in the writings of the apostles: "But for the sins of the *whole world.*" Who gave himself a ransom for *all.* And, "That by the grace of God He should taste death for *every man.*" We must believe there is that perfect unity of purpose and entire consistency in all the dealings of Almighty God towards his creatures, that all who are, or (under the great variety of circumstances to which mankind are liable) ever will be sanctified, are interested and benefited by the one offering of Christ. And we are taught to believe there is no forgiveness of sins but through his blood, and can hardly suppose but that pardon and reconciliation have been extended to those who have never heard of this stupendous display of wisdom, mercy, and power.

6. There is scarcely a word in the New Testament that appears to me to be of deeper and more extensive import than *grace.* It is fully comprehensive of the whole Gospel scheme—"the grace of God," "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Can we believe it possible for any one to meditate upon these evangelical expressions, under the least measure of the influence of the Holy Spirit, without being brought to acknowledge the essentials of the religion of Jesus,—the deity and atonement of the Son of God,—the fallen and dependent state of man,—and the conversion and regeneration of the true believer by the power of the Spirit of God?

7. It is clear from the general tenor of the history and doctrine of the New Testament, and from those prophecies which refer to these latter days, that the Church of God has received "grace for grace." But I am not sure that the Esquimaux, and the inhabitants of Japan, or any other of those nations upon whom the light of an outward revelation has not broken forth, are in a more enlightened state as to the

moral law, or more evidently the objects of grace, than were the remote Asiatic tribes, and other parts of the Gentile world, previous to the coming of our Lord.

But we have every encouragement to believe that those who are sent among them to labour in the ministry of the word of life will be imbued with a larger measure of the heavenly gift than was ever dispensed, for that special purpose, under any former dispensation. The "promise was to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." To them that are outwardly called, under the power of the Gospel, there is an offered inheritance in the promises; but those to whom the joyful sound hath not reached, the uncalled, are partakers in such measure and proportion as seemeth good unto the Lord, in his grace internally dispensed. Therefore with what peace and confidence and hope may we rest respecting that portion of mankind to whom the Lord hath not, in the wisdom and mercy of his providence, sent the message of his love through the ministry of the word of reconciliation. But blessed are they to whom it is given to pray the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into his harvest. "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few."

8. I think we can hardly doubt but that, in whatever sense we accept the intercessory prayer of our Lord for his church, whether principally prospective of its eminently holy and spiritual state under the ministry of the gospel, or as having a direct bearing on the present state of the disciples, it does describe them as men advanced in the work of regeneration: —"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." But still it was given them to expect a much higher state of personal holiness under the impending outpouring of the Spirit,— "Sanctify them through thy truth;"—and, moreover, that union with the Father and the Son, and that blessed oneness in the truth, for which our Lord prayed, must, I think, be regarded as a state to which they had not then fully attained.

"The Holy Ghost was not yet given." This must be accepted in a qualified sense, and as peculiarly referring to

the *greater* spirituality of the Gospel dispensation. It was the prophecy of the angel that John should be filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth—Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost—Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost—the Holy Ghost was upon Simeon, and it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death.

We can hardly doubt but it was by the operation of the Holy Ghost that the Twelve and the Seventy were prepared for that part in the ministry of the word which was assigned them. And so far as any of the disciples and followers of our Lord were really converted unto God and accepted of Him, we must believe it was by the operation of the Spirit of God within them.

9. I am increasingly impressed with the importance of endeavouring to preserve that distinction which I think the Scripture makes between Christ the Word, and the Holy Ghost. It is a point of great importance to the right understanding of the Gospel. Confounding one with the other has led to great mistakes among professedly spiritually-minded people.

Is it not under the influence of that Spirit which our Lord promised should come from the Father in his name, which He would send, that He is *ordinarily* with his church—that He giveth it power and wisdom? Not but that, as in the instance of Saul on his way to Damascus, He does *extraordinarily* manifest Himself to man. It is among the blessed offices of the Holy Spirit to reprove the world of sin. It is by these reproofs that his powerful influence is felt and acknowledged amongst men, even such as are yet of the world.

"He will guide you into all truth."—"He shall take of mine and show it unto you."—"He shall teach you all things."—"He shall testify of me." Therefore I consider it impossible that those who are the sons of God, led by the Spirit, taught of the anointing, can deny or lightly esteem the truths that are externally revealed; such as the deity, incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of the Saviour, and the doctrine of his atonement and grace.

What a most wonderful, delightful, and engaging harmony is displayed in the work of God in man's redemption! The Father sends the Son, and the Holy Ghost testifies of the Son. The Son offers himself a propitiatory sacrifice to the Father, and the Holy Ghost applies the benefit of the sacrifice and merits to the soul of the believer.

"He will guide into all truth"—not into visionary speculations, not into flights of imagination, not into scepticism and disputation, but into the sobriety, and reality, and certainty of the Truth as it is in Jesus.

10. Though the Son and the Holy Ghost were intimately and mysteriously united in the work of redemption during the incarnation of our Lord, yet He needed not the help and influence of the Spirit in the same way and manner as his disciples and servants do. For on becoming man He did not, nor was it possible that He should, lay aside his Godhead, inasmuch as He is the eternal God.

11. There is very strong and convincing evidence to the reality of the influence of the Holy Spirit, in the instances almost perpetually recurring of those who have been brought up in the grossest ignorance, without the help of many, and some of them with scarcely any, advantages worthy the name of mental cultivation; being, almost immediately on their conversion, brought to a deep and abiding understanding of their relation to God and their fellow-creatures, convinced of sin, and their minds open to receive and embrace all the necessary truths of the Gospel. At the same time their powers, as to literary acquirements, have undergone no change, nor has their store of knowledge been increased in natural things. They remain of the weak and foolish of this world; and yet, their apprehension of spiritual things far exceeding that to which those most devoted to the cultivation of their natural powers have attained by the most laborious and extensive philosophical researches, they are made holy, happy, meek, contented and resigned; and yet it has been evident to the most transient observer that it was not their merely human powers that effected the change.

12. "My grace is sufficient for thee," is, I apprehend, a

word of promise sure to the believer, from the first dawning of the day of visitation until he is brought to the fulness of its meridian glory in the kingdom of his Father.

13. The doctrine of the universal diffusion of the light of truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is set in a clearer point of view by reference to such texts as, "Enoch walked with God,"—"Noah walked with God,"—"My Spirit shall not always strive with man,"—"There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding,"—"The true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,"—in connexion with John iii. 20, 21.

14. Man without grace, whether he is possessed of outward information or not, is in the first place devoid of any profitable saving knowledge of God and his truth; and, in the second place, he is alienated by his wickedness from the life of God, and dead in trespasses and sins.

If it be thus with man in the fall, by what means but by the immediate power of Christ, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, can he obtain knowledge and understanding in the law of God, and the things which pertain to salvation?

What do the Scriptures say of natural religion and of "the light of nature?" If we take Romans ii. 14, 15, in connexion with i. 19, I think we shall have Paul's doctrine on this point in the most perfect consistence with himself, as in Titus ii. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Ephes. v. 13.

15. "Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them tempted Him, and were destroyed of the destroyer." On the pre-existence of the Lord Jesus, Poole gives the following note:—"The term Christ here is very remarkable to prove Christ's divine nature and existence before He was incarnate; for the same person who is here called Christ is called God, Psalm cvi. 14—and Jehovah* also in the same psalm; neither could they have tempted Christ at that time, if at that time He had not been in existence."

* It is needful to refer to the original text to see the force of this remark, as the authorised version substitutes LORD for Jehovah.

Our Lord bears unequivocal testimony to his deity in his own words to the Seventy, in Luke x.—"Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you;" and in Matthew, when He sent forth the teachers, He gave them power against all unclean spirits.

16. The Holy Spirit is the grand agent to whom we are taught to look for the fulfilment of unfulfilled prophecy in the moral reformation of the world—the overthrow of pagan idolatry—the breaking of the Mahometan yoke—the extinction of war, and the extermination of personal slavery—for the removal of error, superstition and infidelity from the church, and the propagation of pure evangelical truth throughout the heathen nations—whether it be effected through the ministry of the word, or the diffusion of the knowledge of revealed religion by the circulation of the Holy Scriptures—and for the furtherance of whatever other means Almighty God may be pleased to appoint for the fulfilling of that blessed word of prophecy so animating and full of comfort to the true believer, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever."

The Yearly Meeting of 1835 was to William Forster a time of peculiar interest and painful solicitude. It was well known that a large amount of unsettlement and excitement had for some time existed in regard to some important questions of Christian doctrine and practice, chiefly arising out of the lamentable events in America. Nor could it be a matter of surprise, in looking at the causes and the character of the disruption which had occurred there, that some reaction, in an opposite direction, should take place among the members of the Society in England. Alarmed at the rapid and widespread adoption in America of the sceptical opinions of Elias

Hicks and his followers, a few zealous individuals in this country had been induced, by a well-meant desire to guard their fellow-members against similar errors, so indiscreetly to press upon their attention some of the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, as, in some degree, to lose the proper balance of truth —especially as it relates to the practical application of these doctrines. Out of the controversy thus called forth arose a state of disunity among the ministers and elders of the Lancashire Quarterly Meeting, which could not escape the notice of the Yearly Meeting; and, with a view to the restoration of harmony, a committee was appointed to labour with their brethren for the attainment of that object.

William Forster was one of that committee, and he deeply felt the delicacy and the importance of the appointment. They diligently applied themselves to the service; and six distinct visits were paid by them to that district, before the end of 1836. It is not needful, or desirable, here to enter circumstantially into these sorrowful transactions,* except as they have a bearing upon the Christian character and standing of William Forster. Meek as a lamb, yet made bold as a lion and firm as a rock, he had unflinchingly stood in the gap when, in another land, it was attempted to rob Christ of his glory, and to undermine the *foundation* of the Christian faith; and, when he now saw the *superstructure* endangered, he was not less faithful in upholding what he believed to be the truth of God developed in its practical results. Towards the conclusion of the labours of

* An able review of these events will be found in the "Memoirs of J. J. Gurney, by J. B. Braithwaite," chap. xxvii.

the committee in the Eleventh Month of 1836, upwards of thirty resignations of membership in our Society were sent in to the Monthly Meeting, and William Forster was one of the friends of the Yearly Meeting's Committee, appointed to visit the dissidents. In reference to this service, he writes from Manchester :—

1836. *12th mo. 8th.*—The meeting for worship was a good solid meeting. I thought George Richardson's ministry weighty and full of comfort. When the resignations of last month were brought before the meeting, after a letter had been read respecting them, I ventured to propose the appointment of a committee to take them under care, and proceed as the occasion might seem to require, or, I believe I said, as might seem to be for the good of the individuals and for the honour of the cause. A committee was appointed of ten friends. I do not see how we shall proceed; most likely by a division of labour. The trial is weighty, and I am ready to sink under the responsibility of it. I could be very anxious; but I try to hope that a hand will be over us to keep us from harm.

12th.—I am here in the depth of many sorrows and sometimes much conflict of mind; but I cannot regret having come. I do not know that I have, for many months past, felt myself more in the way of my duty than in the course of Seventh-day. I think our visit is understood, and felt to be a visit of love and Christian kindness.

I think it an inexpressible favour, and one for which I cannot be too thankful, that from house to house my mind is kept in a state of quietness, and tenderness, and love; that I am enabled, in the feeling of it, to tell friends of my love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and my hope in Him, and at the same time to press upon them a diligent and devoted attention to the practical work of the Holy Spirit.

15th.—I shall not soon forget our meeting to-day. My way was opened in ministry to my own admiration. I had

not spoken before since we came to Manchester, except a few words on prayer on First-day afternoon. The meeting for discipline was large and conducted with much quiet; and during part of the time there was a feeling of remarkable solemnity. It seemed as if the savour of dear George Richardson's prayer continued with us through the second meeting. Our report was long.

The following extract from the report which the Committee handed in to the Monthly Meeting, sufficiently indicates the merits of the case, to account for the deep sorrow which William Forster experienced on that occasion.

On reviewing the various reasons assigned by the different individuals for withdrawing themselves from the Society, we do not regard it as inconsistent with the object of our appointment to submit to the Monthly Meeting the following observations.

It is under feelings of deep sorrow and regret for the friends who have apprehended it needful for them to withdraw from our religious Society,—in order, as they allege, to enjoy the full benefit of the Gospel of Christ in faith and practice,—and also in religious concern for the upholding of our Christian principles, that we make the following declaration:—

We do wholly and distinctly deny the justice of that imputation which, in various forms, has been cast upon our religious Society, as if it undervalued the blessed message of reconciliation through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one great sacrifice for the sins of all mankind, and instead thereof insisted in an inclusive, and therefore in a false and unscriptural manner, upon the doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit for our salvation. By giving way to dissatisfaction with our religious Society on these points, we fear that some of our friends have suffered serious loss, and have been led eventually to doubt the reality of those impressions, and that work of the Holy Spirit immediately upon the mind

of man, which, in the universality of the love of God, we believe to be graciously vouchsafed for the awakening of sinners and their conversion.

We feel engaged, on the present occasion, to record our unabated attachment to those views of Christian truth which our Society has entertained as a body, being, in our deliberate conviction, the truth of God as revealed in Holy Scripture, and to which the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, bears witness in the hearts of believers.

We own no other Gospel than that of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom the inspired evangelist bears record—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." And, according to the doctrine of the Apostles, we believe that "every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God," and that "no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Spirit:" and, further, "that Christ died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again;" and we unhesitatingly acknowledge that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." In the words of our honourable elder, George Fox, this Jesus, "who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we believe there is no other." But we are afresh convinced that these blessed gospel truths cannot be realized in our own experience, unless we follow the light of the Spirit of God.

We own no other spiritual guide, no other power, than that immediate manifestation of the power of the Spirit of God which wrought effectually in the early believers, by which they were brought to true repentance, converted from the corruptions of their fallen nature, baptized into one body, made fruitful unto God, and prepared for an inheritance in his heavenly kingdom. Our trust for partaking in this inheritance is not in "works of righteousness which we have done," but solely in the free mercy of God through Jesus Christ,

"in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."

We may also add our strong conviction that no section of the Christian Church values more highly than Friends do, and ever have done, or accepts with more thankfulness to our heavenly Father the boon of the revelation of his will to man, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. In the language of the Apostle we acknowledge that "the Holy Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," and that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Our Society, from one generation to another, in its collective capacity, has faithfully pressed upon its members the frequent and reverential reading of the Holy Scriptures, both by Friends individually and in their families. Often and very earnestly has the instruction of their children in these sacred truths been recommended to them, and we are persuaded that this godly care has been remarkably blessed to many.

We think it but justice to ourselves and the Body to declare that the free and unfettered preaching of the gospel is, and ever has been, highly prized among us; and it is our conviction that to no people is it more precious: we cannot, however, accept that as the ministry of the word in our assemblies for public worship which we do not believe to be exercised under the fresh and immediate putting forth of the Holy Head of the Church.

Intimately connected with this view of the qualification essential to the right exercise of gospel ministry is the practice of our Society of silent waiting before the Lord in meetings for divine worship. We do continue to regard this practice as most in accordance with a true estimate of the spiritual nature of the Christian religion, of our utter helplessness, and entire dependence upon the mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom we have access to the Father, and obtain the help of the Holy Spirit, by which it is given us to worship Him who is a Spirit "in spirit and in truth," and to enjoy that communion with God which is beyond all words.

In parting with our dear friends, we cannot but express

our warm and affectionate interest in their spiritual welfare individually, and our desire that they may be restored to those views of Christian faith and practice which we believe to be truth, and that they may be again united with us in religious Society.

Manchester, Twelfth Month 15th, 1836.

These afflictions of the church, so exceedingly painful at the time, have passed away—leaving behind, it is true, a lesson of deep instruction to the thoughtful mind, but no distinct organization of a permanent character, on the part of those who withdrew from the Society; these having been mostly absorbed by other bodies of Christian professors already existing. Yet, much more pleasant as it would have been to pass by in silence this sad episode in the history of his own community, it seemed due to the character of the subject of this memoir to make some allusion to it. Nor will the beautiful example of Christian faithfulness and love, which he exhibited throughout, fail to render more complete our estimate of what he really was.*

In the discussions which arose during the Yearly Meeting of 1835 and 1836, some remarks which

* It was William Forster's wont to act in the spirit of the excellent Henry Venn, already referred to.

When once asked respecting a young minister, about whom he had been much interested, whether he was a Calvinist or an Arminian, H. V. replied, "I really do not know: he is a sincere disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that is of infinitely more importance than his being a disciple of Calvin or Arminius." On other occasions he said, "I hate opinions, and would not give a pin's point to have any one believe as I do, till the scriptures, by the Spirit's teaching, open his understanding." "Those who exalt the Lord Jesus as all their salvation, and abase man, I rejoice in." "We must be as little children—we must be daily exercising ourselves in humble love and prayer—we must be looking up to our Saviour for the Holy Ghost. And after this has been our employment for many years, we shall find how

he made appear to have more than a transient interest. He said, on one occasion:—

I have been thinking much this morning of that charity which believeth all things, and which endureth all things: the source from whence it comes is inexhaustible. Let us seek more and more to sympathize in the infirmities, errors and transgressions, one of another. May it please the Lord to give us to pray one for another, and for ourselves, that He will set a watch on our thoughts and on our lips. Let us live in the spirit of prayer that this may be our experience; then we shall be kept from doing or saying anything that would lessen another in the estimation of our friend—saying anything which, if it worked round to his hearing, might raise in him any hardness of heart.

Backbiting is a malicious practice; it is saying that of another behind his back which we would not say to his face; undervaluing him, and reporting evil of him, in direct opposition to that blessed charity which would receive a testimony

much truth there is in that divine assertion, 'If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.' I used to please myself with the imagination, fifteen years ago, that by prayer for the Holy Ghost, and reading diligently the Lively Oracles, I should be able to understand all scripture, and give it all one clear and consistent meaning. That it is perfectly consistent I am very sure; but it is not so to any mortal's apprehension here. We are so proud, that we must always have something to humble us; and this is one means to that end.

Though the doctrines of grace are clear to me, I am still no friend to high Calvinism. A false, libertine Calvinism stops up every avenue: sin, the Law, holiness, experience, are all nothing. Predestination cancels the necessity of any change, and dispenses at once with all duty. What difficulties surround us? What rocks on each hand? Were not our Pilot infallible, it were impossible to steer through the narrow pass which lies between Antinomian abuse of the doctrines of grace, and self-righteous renunciation of the blood of the cross.

O Prince of Peace, heal our divisions. Diffuse thy patient, loving spirit. Give discernment to distinguish aright between what is essential and what is not, and to bear with each other's differences, till the perfect day discovers all things in their true proportions."

Henry Venn's Life. Fifth edit., pp. 33-34.

to good rather than to evil. When we hear it said, "I hope these things are not true;" or, "but I hope so-and-so"—if we acted up to true charity, we might find it best to go to our friend and show him his error. This might cost us something, but not too much. To go in meekness, tenderness and love, is no easy thing; but as we ask for divine help it will not be withheld. Assistance would be granted in labouring to restore; and we should possess an evidence that we have discharged our duty in love. We might enjoy the blessedness of that saying of our Lord, "Thou hast gained thy brother."

At another time:—

My attention has been attracted to the state of some of our small meetings; and tender feelings have been awakened for those who may dwell under the feeling of their disadvantages and those of their children. From not having the benefit of much instrumental means, some may draw a contrast between their circumstances and those of other religious professions, and so be cast down. It is a fact that many of our meetings are very small; and they may be still smaller, and be held from month to month in silence. Those of us, however, who belong to such meetings, have to acknowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ does not withdraw his presence from us, when, in a humble, watchful state, we are brought to wait upon the Lord—that these times are often occasions of comfort; and we have cause to be of a hopeful mind for ourselves and our children.

We know what it was that first brought us into right feeling, that brought us into reverent fear, that was a swift witness against sin, that brought us into deep sorrow because of our transgressions and our sins, that brought our souls into prayer, and brought us to ask forgiveness of God, and to some sense of the Saviour—and though this process was not quite so quick and so complete as in more advanced years, yet we had some hope in those days,—some ground for hope that we had peace with God; and we could have no peace but through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Believing that these feelings are often excited in our silent meetings, I feel anxious that discouragement may not prevail; and that, whilst we are careful to give religious instruction to our children, and to commend them in prayer to God, we may never allow anything to escape our lips which may tend to discourage them in regard to our silent meetings. We are bound to retain our testimony in regard to them, and to reverent waiting upon God. May the great work of regeneration—and this is what we want—be carried on; the old man be put off, and the new man put on; the fear of God increase amongst us, and cause us to set a watch upon our tongues, and a guard upon our lips. The more we have of this holy fear, the more we shall be engaged in prayer. O that we may have more of a broken spirit, and nothing is more to be desired for our children—that we may be all sensible to what a small degree the work of grace has been carried on in us—that there may be an increasing number who are walking as pilgrims upon earth—that there may be a growth in grace.

This growth may not lead to much talking about religion; the shewbread was to be eaten by the priests alone. Some of us were not brought up in much talk about the great truths of Christianity. When we were young these great truths were rarely, perhaps too rarely, made the subject of familiar converse; but many of us acknowledge that we are not sensible of serious loss thereby. But do not, dear friends, suppose that because some may not be frequently speaking of the ground of their faith and hope, that therefore they are without this faith and hope; but there are many who do not feel at liberty to speak much on these subjects, who nevertheless live much on Christ, yea feed on Him.

I desire not to speak of my own experience. I think if I had been faithful, I should have come forth in the ministry not long after the fifteenth year of my life. Firm is my faith in the reality of these calls, and that we may accept them as proofs that we are not a deserted people. O! that we may never forego a belief in our Christian principles on this subject. Dear young Friends! be persuaded to believe in the reality of the operations of the Spirit on the mind; and do not be

induced to forsake your silent meetings. A firm belief in the doctrine of the immediate quickening influence of the Holy Spirit can never interfere with your acceptance of the truths of the Bible; but, on the contrary, will render them more precious to you. What I most earnestly crave is, that we may be led to accept the ever-blessed gospel in its fulness.

On another occasion he remarked:—

There are some of our friends who have had frequent and profitable intercourse with professors of other religious societies, and who may have observed in some of them what they may deem to be evidences of a religious life; and finding in them such fruits, without the humiliating course of conduct which our practices lead to, some may be discouraged from this self-denying course. But it is my belief that as Friends keep their minds open to the work of the Holy Spirit, they will find that the cross is thus laid upon them; not by themselves, but by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And believing, as I do, that many who have gone before us would not have attained to the degree of growth and experience which they did, had they not walked in this self-denying path, I would offer a word of encouragement to some that they be attentive to the gentle influence of the Holy Spirit in this respect. There is a danger of making too light of conscientious scruples, as well as of making too much of them. I have been much impressed by a remark in a letter of John Woolman's:—"I cannot give myself a right concern; but when it is laid upon me I endeavour to be faithful."

Again he said at another time:—

There is a possibility that some who have known something of the humbling power of the cross—of being crucified to the world, and the world unto them—may lose the value of this experience. Some of these may think there was formerly a lifeless formality, something like being subject to trammels; but there may be a desire now to be found in a

liberty different from that which is to be found in the Truth. These would do well to see if there be not a temptation to undervalue testimonies and practices, which have had the effect of separating us from the world. We do not undervalue testimonies springing from the cross of Christ — we believe they are a part of what is committed to us in trust. We are bound to acknowledge to the importance of their practical effect: they have worked well amongst us.

It is possible that, after being favoured with tender visitations, these may be lost. After being separated from the world, we may become again entangled in a worldly spirit—our latter days may be worse than our earlier days; whilst some, who have held out to advanced life, have finished their course in favour with the Lord and in the unity of the brethren. Let us trust that that which has brought us hitherto may conduct us to the end.

An intimate acquaintance with the facts of the life and times of George Fox had led him to form a high estimate of his Christian character; and, trying to rebut, in one occasion, some unkind remarks respecting him, he added:—

I have that sort of filial affection for George Fox's memory which I have little doubt I should have felt much more strongly if I could have known him; that, to me, it is something of a personal concern.

On a review of what they had passed through together, he writes about this time

To Josiah Forster.

I think we ought to take comfort in remembering how remarkably we have been helped in our proceedings, whilst acting upon the principle of, from time to time, doing just what the circumstances of the case have seemed to call for; doing as little as we could, and no more.

I feel occasionally cast down, and recollections and associations press in upon my mind which bring me to a tenderness, perhaps not very remote from a godly sorrow. But, upon the whole, as to the stability of the Society, and the testimonies which have been laid upon Friends to the spirituality of the Christian religion, I am cheered, and in good heart. Our numbers may be diminished, and much more so than we could at one time have anticipated; and yet the object for which the Society was brought into existence may be answered, both in this and the future generations of the church. There may be sufferings in store for us, and, probably, I shall have my share; but, at present, this does not make me very unhappy. All I desire is a meek and quiet spirit; and I am not without a reverent hope it will be granted to them that wait for it.

In the midst of the other engagements which devolved upon him as a member of the Yearly Meeting's Committee, William Forster did not wholly turn aside from his Biblical investigations; and, in a letter to J. J. Gurney, written about this time, he remarks:—

I do not know that thou wilt think my researches of much worth; they are confirming and satisfactory to my own mind. And I am thoroughly convinced that we have a clear case of *Horæ Paulinæ* evidence of the Pentateuch holding the place in the minds of the ancient Jews which has been always ascribed to it; and of the subsequent historical books being written at the times to which they are attributed.

As far as my experience and information go, there is no department of the great Christian community in which the gospel of Christ, in all its parts and in all its fulness, is either more precious or more effectual than it is among Friends at the present day.

The work of a select commentary on the Scriptures,

which had so long claimed his attention, was, however, never completed. Whether he thought that the need of it was superseded by other publications, or that his own mind became too much absorbed by the pressure of other duties to allow him to continue it, he appears to have suspended it for a time, and there is no evidence that it was ever resumed, with a view to publication.

For more than twenty years William and Anna Forster had enjoyed their rural home amongst the hills of Dorsetshire; but now that their only son was nearly grown up, many considerations combined to make a change of residence desirable, and, reluctantly as they yielded to the prospect, in the early part of 1837 preparations were actually in progress for removing to the neighbourhood of Norwich towards the close of the year. In the meantime William Forster's tender sympathy was awakened by the concern of J. J. Gurney to pay a religious visit to Friends and others in America; and, in the Fifth Month of this year, he was brought into deep sorrow by the sudden death of his sister Deborah, after an illness of twelve hours, which was followed by the decease of his beloved mother, a few months later. Thus their last year at Bradpole was one of more than usually varied interest and peculiar trial; but under all the Lord was their rock and their refuge.

In the Seventh Month William Forster went down to Liverpool on the occasion of the embarkation of his beloved friend, J. J. Gurney, for the United States. They met at Manchester; Elizabeth Fry, Jonathan and Hannah C. Backhouse, and Eliza P. Kirkbride, being also of the party. "We were a

united company," says Elizabeth Fry, in her journal.* "That evening William Forster read the 54th chapter of Isaiah, expressing his full belief that our dearest Joseph would experience the promises contained in the last few verses." It is not easy for those unacquainted with the individuals to realize all the interest which attached to such a little group, so long united by many ties, but most of all by fellowship in Christ their common Lord, spending a few days together, among their friends at Liverpool, and finally taking leave of the messenger of the gospel, bound for distant fields of labour and of suffering. On board the *Monongahela*, J. J. Gurney remarks:—"William Forster's last words in ministry to me, were for the purpose of reminding me of our blessed Saviour's declaration, 'Behold, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' Here is my security, here is my comfort, here let me take my rest on the bosom of the mighty deep."†

After this act of Christian friendship and love towards a fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ, William Forster resumed his home duties; but, in the Ninth Month, he was again called away to attend the last moments of his surviving parent, to whom he had long been bound by more than filial affection. His letters to his wife, who was unable to accompany him on account of the delicate state of her own health, lay open his feelings on this occasion with almost youthful tenderness. Writing of his mother's decease, he says:—

Her last moments were apparently free from much pain, and so gentle was her dismissal from her earthly tabernacle

* See her Memoirs, by Susanna Corder, p. 467.

† See his Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 83.

that I was not aware of the moment at which she ceased to breathe. You may imagine what I must have passed through the latter part of my journey, until I reached Tottenham, and found I was still in time for my beloved parent to know me. She knew me, and was most tender towards me, and evidently pleased that I had come.

He afterwards adds :—

She evidently had a terror of the last conflict; but it soon subsided; she repeatedly desired us to pray for her; and I thought she found hope and support in our expression of confidence that she would be safely carried through. When I told her what a blessed exchange it would be, she said enough to satisfy me that her fears were all confined to the last hour. She said, very emphatically, that the pains of death were hard to bear; but a wounded conscience——. J. finished the sentence for her; and she implied that all her pain and sorrow belonged to the body. My last communication with her was to this effect, that, though we could not understand her sufferings, there was comfort in the remembrance that her Saviour had passed through the same conflict; that He knew what it was, and that He would carry her safely through it all. I was never in my life so fully sensible of the presence of the Lord Jesus. Nay, had He been with us in his glorified body, I think it would not have been more to my satisfaction than the evidence I enjoyed of his invisible presence; and, when all was over, I was so full of thanksgiving and praise, so persuaded of her entrance into the peace and joy of her Lord, it seemed for the time to absorb every other feeling.

Reluctantly detained at home, Anna Forster writes to her husband :—

9th mo. 22nd. Bradpole.—I must indulge myself with a few lines to-day. Very tenderly do I picture you all; and it would have been very sweet to have been with you. I can hardly think of being away; it is so trying. And yet I am

far from well. I hope none of my relatives will be hurt with me—my beloved sisters especially. If I had felt the event less in itself, and less for them, it would have been easier to go.

I hope to be favoured to remain quietly to-morrow in my own room—with you in heart—I humbly trust. It is affecting not to be with thee, dearest, in this touching time, and very much so in many respects, as it regards myself. But we must look above, in these things, to the blessed reality enjoyed by the beloved one in glory.

How I think of dear Joseph's beautiful address to our dear mother, at our beloved Debby's burial, and at the house several days after. Truly it is not long that these dear ones were parted; and I feel holy consolation, indeed, on their behalf. Yet I tenderly feel for you, as well as myself. Dear W. E.—precious fellow!—he must not be afraid to bring the subject home, and then he will be comforted.

It will be very sweet if you have such lovely weather to-morrow—so like the heavenly beams on our dear sister's grave. A lovely emblem, though it is not needed for assurance of the reality.

After attending the funeral of his beloved mother, W. F. again writes to his wife:—

We are just returned from Winchmore-hill. I think I never was laid so low by sorrow before. I do not murmur; sometimes I can give thanks in remembrance of the mercy and care of our Heavenly Father towards her. I am satisfied that she has found a resting-place in the bosom of her Saviour, that He has made her his own for ever; but all this, much as it is to my comfort and support, does not assuage my grief; and I cannot but mourn and be very sad and heavy in spirit.

I have neither time nor heart to enter much into the detail of this morning. I found myself most at home in sitting part of the time alone this morning by the dear remains. Our time around the grave was most affecting to

me. I never felt such inexpressible bitterness of grief; but yet I could unite in dear Elizabeth Fry's thanksgiving, and her ministry in the meeting was soothing and strengthening to me.

The time of their removal from Bradpole now drew near. They had many friends and neighbours around them, in whom they had long been much interested—to part from these was a great trial to them; and they were themselves so generally beloved that their leaving was quite a cause of mourning to many—the poor, especially, felt it deeply. But, by the end of the year, they were quietly settled in their new home near Norwich, pleasantly situated, just half way between the city and Earlham.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1838—1843.

His change of residence at once opened to William Forster a wider sphere of usefulness; and he was not slow to avail himself of the enlarged opportunity of doing good. The extent of poverty and suffering which not unfrequently prevailed in a city of more than 40,000 inhabitants, subject to all the fluctuations incident to manufacturing employments, could not fail to present a field of constant sympathy and active exertion to one so much alive to the hardships and miseries of his fellow-creatures. His note-books furnish an interesting, though very brief record of the time spent, when at home, in visiting the abodes of wretchedness; and the hours employed in superintending the administration of funds raised for the relief of distress. He was an industrious member of the "Soup Society" and of the "Provident Coal" and "Bedding Associations." Week after week he might be seen taking his turn in dealing out hundreds of quarts of soup to the poor applicants, and in distributing tickets for coals, blankets, &c. The Hospital and School for the Indigent Blind engaged much of his sympathy, and he was an active committee-man of both institutions.

Other objects of interest which had claimed his attention whilst resident in Dorsetshire, were not less dear to him after his removing into Norfolk. He continued to take a warm interest in the labours of

the British and Foreign Bible Society. Every measure calculated to promote the circulation of the Holy Scriptures throughout both city and country, whether by Bible associations, colportage, or other means, had his support. His anxiety to preserve the principles of the Society intact, in all the proceedings of the Committee and its agents, was very observable. He took great interest in the supply of Testaments to the German and Italian itinerant musicians. He visited them at their lodgings, and had often the gratification of finding them engaged in reading the books which the committee, through him, had granted them. On several occasions, with the permission of the head of the troupe of equestrian performers, he presented a Bible or Testament to each individual, writing the name of the party in it. Another object was the supply of the "wherry-men," who navigate the river between Norwich and Yarmouth, and who, with their wives, and occasionally one or two children, spend much of their time on board, and have few opportunities of attending public worship. The supplying foreign sailors, who visited the port of Yarmouth, with copies of the Scriptures in their native tongue, was adopted by the committee at his suggestion. Yet, with his retiring nature, he never could be prevailed upon to take part in any public meeting, beyond giving it the sanction of his presence.

He always took a great interest in the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. When travelling it had been his practice to visit the hospitals; and thus he was enabled to furnish many useful hints. He frequently visited the patients, and made himself acquainted with the circumstances of many of them. Those of

peculiar interest he did not lose sight of, on the party leaving the hospital. The calming influence of his presence in the board-room was very perceptible. On one occasion, when a poor man was about to be executed, he called the attention of those present to the circumstance, and proposed that they should for a short time suspend the business. One who was present expressed his belief that, during that impressive silence, many a secret prayer was offered up for the poor culprit.*

Though the British slave trade had long been abolished, the inhuman traffic was still extensively carried on by the Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilians. T. F. Buxton was closely investigating the subject, with a view of finding a "Remedy;" and public attention was beginning to be awakened in regard to it. With reference to this William Forster writes:—

1838. *2nd mo. 18th.*—I wish that the pamphlet on the horrors of the African Slave-Trade, just published in London, may obtain a general circulation among Friends throughout the nation; and that they may get it read as much as possible by their neighbours. Surely we ought not, as individuals, or as a nation, to give ourselves any rest until we can be sure that we have each of us done our very utmost to stay this dreadful scourge.

It should make us thankful to observe, as I think we may, that there is a revival of feeling, and something like a determined zeal, on the part of some of our most influential men, to apply themselves with earnestness to the object of its utter extinction; and I trust we may hope that the time is at hand in which our merciful Father in heaven will be pleased to interpose on behalf of this afflicted portion of his creatures.

* Some of these particulars are kindly furnished by one who largely shared with him in his benevolent efforts in Norwich.

3rd mo. 25th.—My heart and mind are more than ever engrossed by the enormities and miseries of the slave-trade. Our Hampshire paper of last week gives account of the capture of a slave-ship in the West Indies with 325 slaves on board; the wreck of another, from which 121 were saved; and the escape of a third. So that in one week we hear of not less than, we may suppose, 600 or 700, torn away and carried across the Atlantic, never to return. And who can tell a tenth part of the wretchedness, the murders, and the burnings attendant upon their capture?

Such, in addition to his ordinary avocations as a member and Christian minister of his own community, were some of the objects which, for many years after his taking up his residence in Norfolk, occupied much of William Forster's time and attention, when at home. But he was not unfrequently called to preach the gospel in other parts.

In the Fourth Month of this year, he was liberated by his Monthly Meeting to visit "the families of Friends in the different meetings constituting the Monthly Meeting of Pardshaw, in Cumberland;" and in the succeeding five years he was at different times engaged in holding meetings with the inhabitants of his own county; in visiting Friends in Westmoreland, and in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire (1839); in Lancashire (1840); and in attending the Yearly Meeting in Dublin, and holding some meetings in Ireland. In 1841 he attended the General Meeting in Scotland, and held meetings both in going and returning; and appointed meetings also in some parts of his own Quarterly Meeting for the inhabitants of the district. In 1842 he was similarly occupied both among Friends and the public at large, in some parts of Yorkshire, and in Essex; and in 1843 a certificate

was granted him for "visiting the younger Friends, and attenders of some of the larger meetings in England and Ireland." Of none of these services, however, any detailed accounts are preserved. They occupied much time, and involved no small sacrifice of domestic enjoyment on his own part and that of his wife; but, amidst all this, many were the seasons when they could rejoice together that they were "counted worthy" to do or to suffer anything for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The safe and peaceful return of J. J. Gurney from his arduous labours in America, in the autumn of 1840—and the opportunity of more frequent intercourse with T. F. Buxton and his family, and other relatives in Norfolk, added greatly to their social pleasures; whilst to Anna Forster it was a source of much comfort, especially during her husband's frequent engagements from home, to be so near her only brother, and some of the companions of her earlier days. The "bounds of their habitation" appeared indeed to have been "fixed" by Him whom they sought to serve.

William Forster had taken much interest in his friend Joseph Sturge's visit to the West Indies, and he rejoiced when, very much in consequence of this, the apprenticeship system was entirely abolished on the 1st of Eighth Month, 1838, and all the coloured people in the British Colonies were, without restriction, at once made free. His correspondence, during the period embraced by this chapter, shows how closely he kept his eye upon public events of every kind, affecting the welfare of his fellow men and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. Thus he writes respecting the Foreign Slave Trade :—

To JOSEPH STURGE.

1839. *4th mo. 29th.*—It is a remarkable fact that, notwithstanding the trade has been carried on to such a fearful extent ever since its abolition by the British, and that societies for almost every good object have been established since that period,—until the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society started into existence the other day, there was not one professing to grasp this mighty evil. This is a consideration that brings me to feel the seriousness of our position, and the very earnest desire that we may act wisely, boldly, promptly, and with unanimity. One of our first objects should be to make a survey of the ground we propose to occupy; and it is not too soon for our friends to be getting together materials for a review of the present state of slavery in the colonies of the different European powers, and in Brazil and the United States, in Ceylon and India; and of the existing state of the African slave-trade, and the internal trade in slaves in the United States.

To THE SAME.

1840. *7th mo. 12th.*—To thee I may say that my feelings are so much harrowed up by a sense of the cruelties and atrocities of the slave-trade, and the horrors, and evils, and sinfulness of war, even in its most mitigated form, that it does go very far towards embittering my existence. But I make myself sure, and the conviction of it ought to quiet the conflict with which I am tormented, that not only is the weakness of my own nature known to Him who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but from Him who is omniscient and omnipotent, none of the sufferings, and not a single item of all the woe with which the great family of man is afflicted, can possibly be hid. And we none of us can say how soon, or through what feeble and despised instruments, He may be pleased to work towards the accomplishment of those purposes which are every one of them purposes of wisdom, pity, and love. . . . We must try to hope, for the sake of the many millions of his helpless, suffering children, for whose good we desire in our poor little way to be given up to labour,

that He will not suffer our cause, if indeed it is his cause, to be injured. O that our unwatchfulness, and hastiness, and distrust, and indiscretion, may in nowise mar it!

To the Same.

1840. *9th mo. 23rd.*—My heart often sinks within me at what I hear of the preparations for war both at home and abroad. Scarcely a day passes without my thinking, to say the least of it, of the armed force sent out against the Chinese nation. How strange! and what a disgrace to our highly professing nation, that, towards the close of the session, the Ministers should be able to speak, uncontradicted, and with so much boldness, on their measures having met such general approbation. Can it be said that, among all the religious and philanthropic institutions of the day, a single voice was uttered to stay their proceedings towards devastation, and fire, and blood!

To the Same.

10th mo. 9th.—I am looking with a sort of trembling anticipation towards every day's news. It is hard to conjecture what tidings the next despatches may bring from Canton. I imagine that we are not generally aware of the amount of the armament that "we Christians" are bringing upon that great and populous nation. I was astonished, and little less than shocked, at seeing in the paper two or three days ago a detailed account of the ships of war destined, as it appeared, to that expedition; and no less affected with sorrow and shame and indignation (I hope not in the worst sense of the word), that at the close of the session Ministers should come forward and so boldly declare that they had the support of the nation in their operations against the Chinese.

The time surely will come that the church—I mean the great body of practical Christians—will, if it can do no more, boldly protest, in the meekness and love of Christ, against every recurrence of war; and faithfully warn the nation against all its most distant approaches, and yet more and

more individually separate themselves from all participation in such systematized cruelty, and barbarism, and wrong.

We want a paper with a good, sound, right-principled editor, a thorough out-and-out Christian man; and a warm-hearted, discreet, zealous committee to back him up from time to time, as often as occasion may require it—alas, how often!—simply, wisely, and plainly to put before the public, or rather before the religious professors of the day, what is actually going forward, and with plain-spoken honesty show them how ill it accords with that holy name which they hold most dear. I can hardly help thinking, bad as the world is, and worldly as the professing church may be, that before long something might be done, either by giving more efficiency to our present Peace Society, or by establishing a new one on a broader and larger scale.

To the Same.

11th mo. 5th.—Just run thy eye over this table of the wars of Europe, and reflect for a moment what must have been the appalling amount of misery that man has been inflicting upon man in all those generations; and then think what we are bound to do to prevent a recurrence of the same state of things.

To the Same.

11th mo. 12th.—My wish is to see the subject taken up simply on Christian principle, as a great moral question; and that we may be helped to show to the world, and more especially to professors of religion, the evil, the sinfulness, and the guilt of all war, under every pretext whatsoever, and under every possible circumstance; and that the true Christian can neither fight nor have recourse to arms for his defence. It must be confessed that the carrying out of these (as the doctrine of our Lord calls us to make profession of them) implies such an advanced growth in grace, such meekness, gentleness, forbearance, and forgiveness towards men, and such submissiveness to God, and active faith in his

superintending care and fatherly protection, that we may well say, Who is sufficient for it?

This consideration often brings me very low as to myself, and my many shortcomings in respect to these and all other Christian virtues; but it does not shake me from the sense I have ever had of the nature of our high calling in Christ, nor of the power that is vouchsafed under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to enable us under every exigency in life to love our neighbour even as ourselves—to trust in the Lord at all times, and continually to hope in his care and love.

The depth of thought I have passed through on this point of Christian duty has, I believe, been made useful to me; inasmuch as, perhaps more than anything else, it has brought me to some little understanding, and I trust to some feeling too, of the inseparable connexion of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ with the righteousness of the divine law. And of all other things I love to be driven to the Saviour, and to have my need of Him brought home to my soul.

To the Same.

11th mo. 23rd.—I am anxious to know what thou, and those of our anti-slavery friends with whom thou art in correspondence, think to be our duty in reference to the recent act of Government in acknowledging the republic of Texas. I do not undertake to anticipate the part the Committee may think it right to take on the occasion; whether immediately to apply by deputation to the Foreign Office to be informed what measures they have taken, by way of treaty or otherwise, for security against the republic giving sanction to the African slave-trade, and what measures they have adopted to ensure the extinction of slavery itself.

I think we should only be doing our part as an Anti-Slavery Society to make such inquiry. And that we have a right to expect from our Government, that after having, at such an enormous cost to the nation, declared their sense of

the wickedness and impolicy of slavery, they would not recognize the establishment of a new nation without having satisfied themselves that no countenance would be given to such abomination.

Unless we can be sure that provision is made both for the extinction of slavery and for the prohibition of the slave-trade —and without one we can have no hope of the other—and unless we do declare ourselves on the occasion, and make our protest in language plain enough to be understood by all men, we shall not only have to bear upon our consciences the accumulation of all the evils and horrors of this hateful traffic; but our anti-slavery friends in America, France, and Holland, and those whose eyes are opening to the iniquity of slavery in Spain, and Portugal, and Brazil, and Cuba, will have cause to doubt our sincerity; and we know not to what degree we may discourage them in the cause of humanity and justice. Surely we owe it in sympathy to those whose hearts and hands we are labouring to strengthen, to adopt some such course, and to do it without delay.

Possibly I take an exaggerated view of the case, and in my deep discouragement may be tempted to undue hopelessness. But to thee I may say that the sorrows of it are nothing short of a positive affliction. Not only, as I cannot but fear, and indeed expect, the spreading of slavery over that large and fertile country; but also because I regard it as next to a matter of certainty—let them adopt whatever measures of treaty, or law, or policy they may—that it will give a stimulus to the trade in slaves from Africa.

In all we say or do on the occasion, let us, my dear friend, most carefully keep to moral and Christian grounds: they are large enough for us. And we know that, based upon such principles, all our enemies, let them do what they may, will not be able to baffle us. We must keep to our platform,—moral, religious, and pacific. If happily our protest be thoroughly imbued with the spirit of our constitution as an Anti-Slavery Society, the more publicity we give to it the better. I wish for such a document as we can send to France, and Holland, and Denmark, and Spain, and Brazil, and to the

President of the United States, and to the governors of all the different States of the Union; and that it may be translated for the people of the continental nations.

The *Patriot* has behaved well on the occasion. The *Globe*, I see, merely announces the fact. The *Morning Chronicle* enters more fully into the subject; and it is appalling to see with what cold-heartedness they can advocate the measure on grounds of worldly expediency and commercial policy, without even once seeming to be aware of the extent of misery to which thousands of our brethren may be subjected in the cultivation of those fertile plains. Alas, for the spirit of this world and its policy!

He had now become familiar with the working of the various benevolent institutions in Norwich; and, amongst other objects, the different schools for the children of the poorer inhabitants had claimed much of his attention. The winter of 1840-41 was one of great suffering to this class, occasioned by an almost total suspension of trade. In common with many of his fellow-townsmen, William Forster was deeply touched by the appalling condition of the destitute; and it was at this time that, at his suggestion, the Soup Kitchen was opened, and the "Provident Coal" and "Bedding Associations," before alluded to, were established. Liberally supported by the contribution of funds, he was, as might be expected, one of the chief workers. Early and late, and with great labour and self-sacrifice, he visited more than three thousand poor families in the city, and devoted his time to the relief of the prevailing distress.

He commences the new year, 1841, with the following memorandum:—

1st mo. 1st.—On the opening of the new year a variety of subjects of interest and thoughtfulness present themselves, some of which I incline to enumerate on paper.

After alluding to the great delicacy of his beloved wife, to the prospect of his son in business, and to various religious services which presented themselves, he adds:

I must not omit to mention my deep interest in the cause of negro emancipation and the extinction of the slave trade, and for the spreading of the principles of peace and universal brotherhood among the nations of Christendom; in the upholding a more upright and thorough-going testimony against all bearing of arms; for the carrying out of the principle of truth in divine worship—and the right exercise of Christian ministry, both among Friends and in the church at large. And I cannot but look with interest as well as apprehension towards the prospects of the African expedition, and the proceedings of the Civilization Society.

With the opening of the year our approaching Yearly Meeting presents itself, and I am reminded of the service to which I am appointed in Dorset and Hants, Westmoreland and Northamptonshire; and, though last not least, my interest and connexion with Earlham and Northrepps.

Again he writes in allusion to slavery:—

To JOSIAH FORSTER.

1841. *2nd mo. 11th.*—It is to me a striking, and at the same time a melancholy consideration, that the largest trade in any one article that has ever, perhaps, existed among men, and that which is just now the very life and soul of slavery in America, is our importation and consumption of their cotton. We may form some imperfect idea of the trade in cotton, and the working of it up, and the wear of it, in picturing to ourselves what would be the amount of misery on both sides the water, were anything to occasion an entire suspension of intercourse for twelve or eighteen months.

He took a deep interest in the preparation of the well-known Declaration on the "Unlawfulness of all

Wars and Fightings under the Gospel," issued by the Yearly Meeting of 1841.* In reference to this, after alluding to the words of the Apostle: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law," he remarks:—

As it is impossible to maintain a good conscience towards God without endeavouring to walk in the way of his commandments, we might press it upon Friends to be faithful to the measure of light with which their consciences are enlightened, and to commend their high profession by a life of righteousness and charity in all things; and then express our sense of the largeness of the divine law, that it applies itself to the enlightened conscience of men in every age, and every nation, and our desire that Christians of every name and every tongue may be brought to walk by this rule.

To think how large a proportion of the population of every nation professing the religion of Christianity are trained to war and fighting! how many who, both by sea and land, from early youth to the end of their days, seem to live to no other purpose than to be prepared to destroy the property and the lives of their fellow-creatures; to kill, burn, and destroy, at the bidding of their rulers; so that, even among those to whom the Gospel of Christ is precious, there are to be found those who look to occasions of war, and to warlike measures, for the subsistence of themselves and their families; that not only are the physical powers of hundreds of thousands—I speak of the aggregate of Christendom—of every succeeding generation thus devoted to the violation of God's righteous law, but those intellectual faculties with which Divine Providence has endowed man for the best and noblest purposes, are degraded to the devising of the most effectual means of inflicting pain and misery on his brother man—wounding, maiming, and even destroying the lives, or cutting short the

* See "Addresses and Papers illustrative of the Christian Principles and Testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends." Pp. 176, &c. A. W. Bennett, London.

earthly existence, of those who may be deemed the enemies of their country.

In the love of Christ, that love in which nothing can hurt or destroy, that comprehensive and undistinguishing love which seeks the present and eternal happiness of every son and daughter of Adam, we make our appeal to the rulers of every nation professing the religion of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and to our fellow-creatures of every clime and every description among men, that, renouncing the vain glory and all the pomp of military parade, and that policy which leads to aggrandizement, retaliation, enmity, and revenge, they ought, in their individual and national intercourse, to act upon that precept of our Lord—"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." And may we not reasonably trust that He whose high prerogative it is to bless, or to withhold his blessing, will prosper the counsels of all those who act in obedience to his law;—bless them with internal national peace and happiness, and make them a blessing to all around them?

To JOSEPH STURGE.

2nd mo. 25th.—I have been labouring along under the pressure of many cares and burthens, and many are my secret trials and discouragements; but nothing moves me from a deep and steady attachment to our great cause. Nothing shakes my confidence in the persuasion that we have been rightly directed by a gracious Providence to the true means of grappling with the awful and enormously wasting evil of slavery and the slave-trade.

In reference to the objects of a second general Convention on Slavery and the Slave Trade, he again writes:—

To THE SAME.

Ninth Month 14th, 1841.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I could almost sigh for a tithe of thy zeal and devotedness, so far behind thee do I feel myself to be,

We have placed ourselves, or are placed (for I cannot look upon it to be all our own doing), in a position of fearful responsibility, as the avowed advocates of millions of the most abject and suffering of our fellow-creatures. This simple consideration brings me to the thought,—is there any one thing that we can do towards the termination of that bondage under which they are groaning, almost every day and every hour of their conscious existence?

We know more of their condition than we did two or three years ago; and their oppressors have become aware that a body of men have pledged themselves to befriend the multitudes of those whom they oppress. We are informed of some of the facts of the case in Brazil. As to Cuba we know still more. We have already, thanks to the devotedness of our dear friend G. W. Alexander, made ourselves known in Spain. In Holland it is to be hoped we have gained some footing. All this, setting aside the United States, Texas, and France, brings me to think that we ought to be sure that we have full and sufficient ground to warrant the postponement of a general conference for so long a time as a whole year.

To reflect that in that year, and in every succeeding year until slavery be abolished, not only will many pass off this stage of existence without one single day of freedom upon earth, but that thousands day by day are entering into life with nothing before them but hopeless, abject, uncompensated servitude; and on the countless multitudes who are torn from all that is dear to them in this life, and borne away to supply the places of those just worked to death, themselves to enter on the same lot of misery, for a few years of the most toilsome and oppressive slavery, and then give place to a fresh importation from the same shores—a series of the most horrid rapine and cruelty, which we are all but sure must go on as long as slavery is tolerated in the Western world! Let us in our consciences ask the slaves—or put ourselves in their place; and if they tell us their condition will be alleviated, and their deliverance hastened, by the delay, then by all means fix upon 1843.

We have never yet, as we are bound to do, brought before

our own country and the nations of Europe the utter hopelessness of the extinction of the slave-trade so long as slavery exists. We ought to give more prominence and publicity to the participation in the enormities of slavery by our own countrymen holding shares in mines worked by slaves, and their indirect participation in the very slave-trade itself, by their supply of the articles of barter, and, it is to be feared, by other means. In America there are the prohibitions against education, and that large and most important question of prejudice against colour, and their abominable internal slave-traffic; and were the conference to be held in the spirit we would all wish might prevail, who can say to what degree the anti-slavery feeling of this country and America, now so grievously scattered, might be once more concentrated?

To Josiah Forster.

1842. *4th mo. 19th.*—I have been thankful to find my mind so quietly settled in the views which I have taken from early life. And I think it no small favour from one time to another, as I advance in years, to feel that which satisfies me that the principles instilled by my religious education really were the principles of truth. To be brought to this, even at the expense of some temporary suffering, is more than ample compensation for all the conflict.

Taking a comprehensive view of the general scope of the doctrine of the New Testament, so far as I am capable of it, I am of the judgment that baptism with water is not enjoined by that dispensation of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, and is to endure to the end of time. And I cannot but believe that the upholding of this view of the subject does form no unimportant part of that testimony which our Society was raised up to bear, and for which Friends have been so remarkably kept together from one generation to another. And as I believe that our forefathers were brought to this conclusion by that which was not of themselves, so I also believe that those who come to the teaching and government of the Holy Spirit, and who dwell with that power by which the washing of regeneration is

carried on in the believing soul—which is the power of the Spirit of God—will find that they are neither taught nor led by the Spirit of Truth to adopt those observances (and I consider baptism to be one of them), from which Friends in the beginning, and those who have been brought to fellowship with us from one period to another of our history, have believed themselves to be called.

They lived in the experience and enjoyment of that which constitutes the substance of what was prefigured by types and shadows; and, through that grace which was plenteously poured out upon them, they found the kingdom of God was in power; and to them it was righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

I think it very possible that those whose hearts have been quickened to the love of their Saviour, and who are anxious to make full acknowledgment of their discipleship to him, may, in the warmth of their love, and it might seem in honest-heartedness towards Him, set themselves to that which He does not require of them, and which, not being of the Spirit that quickeneth, does not really profit them in the great work of the soul's sanctification.

William Forster attended the Anti-Slavery Convention held in the Sixth Month of 1843, and he was also one of the delegates appointed by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, about the same time, to present a memorial to the Secretary for the Home Department, on its behalf, against the annexation of Texas to the United States of America. It was on the latter occasion that the touching scene occurred, described more than ten years afterwards in the following letter:—

LEWIS TAPPAN TO WILLIAM ALLINSON.

Brooklyn, New York, *Dec. 24, 1854.*

In June of 1843, I was invited to accompany several Anti-slavery friends (William Forster being one of them) to Downing

Street, where, by previous appointment, they had an interview with Lord Aberdeen, the Secretary for the Home Department, and at present Prime Minister of England.

After the delegation had dispatched the business which occupied their minds, and as they were withdrawing, W. F. lingered behind. I remained with him, as we were to visit some other place together. In the most respectful and tender manner he solicited the attention of Lord A. to a few parting words. As nearly as I can recollect they were as follows:—

"I cannot take leave of Lord Aberdeen without expressing the deep concern of my mind in relation to the responsible and arduous post he occupies, and the earnest desire I feel that he may so discharge its duties, and meet its responsibilities, as to retain a consciousness of having faithfully served his sovereign and country, and meet the approving smile of that great Being before whom in the course of nature he must soon appear, to give an account of the deeds done in the body. Lord Aberdeen needs not any assurance that it is my heart's desire and prayer to God that his labours may be productive of great good, and that in the day of final account he may receive admission into the mansions prepared for those who love and serve the Lord."

During the delivery of these words, uttered with indescribable pathos, the tears were coursing down the cheeks of W. F., and Lord A. seemed to be deeply moved. At the conclusion, his lordship took an affectionate leave of the good man: it was a scene I shall never forget.

William Forster's observations during the sittings of the Yearly Meeting, in connection with the consideration of the state of the Society, as well as on other occasions, were often peculiarly striking and impressive. Few who heard them would very easily forget them; but they were marked by a depth of feeling, and a breadth and clearness of view regarding the aspect and requirements of the church, which cannot be reproduced by any description. The heads

of some of them were taken down at the time when they were delivered; and the following extracts may, perhaps, convey some, although a very inadequate, idea of the Christian concern for the welfare of his brethren which pervaded them.

During the Yearly Meeting of 1838 he remarked:—

The Society does not consider that it asks too much when it inquires of parents whether they train up their children in our Christian profession, as being in accordance with the doctrines and practices of the New Testament. The standard is very high, but not too high; the consideration may well make us tremble. How careful then ought we to be that neither in conduct nor in any other way we offend any "of the little ones," especially such as truly believe in their Lord! May parents watch over their children, unto whom the Lord has already made Himself known by the heart-tendering touches of his love;—to whom the same call has gone forth as was extended to Samuel;—this is no exaggerated view of the case. The true fear of God is essential to a religious life; many children are acquainted with this fear. There is no greater blessing to be desired for our children than that they may fear the Lord in their youth. If we can believe that we have found the Truth for ourselves, how careful, how watchful should we be, lest anything come in the way of our children to deprive them of this possession.

Many young Friends have withdrawn from attending our own meetings, and gone to those of other religious denominations; but I believe that the way of holding our religious meetings had its origin in the very wisdom and power of God; and that, if we do withdraw from them, and attend a ministry not under the immediate putting forth of the Spirit, we descend from higher to lower ground, to the damage of those spiritual views which have been given us to uphold.

What were the meetings of Friends to many of us in early days?—Seasons of true refreshment and edification; we were given to feel that which was beyond all words. Cannot we trust the Lord Almighty with our dear children, infinitely

more dear to their heavenly Father than they can be to us; and pray that He may do for them that which He did for us in the morning of our day? May we be diligent in our care, since we may be instrumental, when we least expect it, in watering what has been sown in their hearts. What we want is faith—faith in the immediate operation of the Spirit of God. O! that we may never do anything to check his work. There is comfort in believing this power is near us;—this eternal power, which is ready to heal, has been felt in this Yearly Meeting.

On another occasion he said:—

We may be allowed to take comfort in the hope of a succession in the ministry. There is no greater object of desire than that such may be rightly prepared to take their place in the Society. Some young men may have had the Lord's work marred in them; the church may have been robbed of what might have been a blessing to it. We ought to cherish an exercise for them, to strive to bring them to believe that their safety, and their usefulness, depend on their being obedient to the puttings forth of the Holy Spirit in all things.

In 1839, in reference to the amusements of early life, he said:—

I feel an earnest desire that we may be given up to sympathy with our younger Friends in their temptations; wishing they may rightly employ increasing leisure, consequent upon the early closing of the shops. Time is a stewardship to be accounted for. Example is of great importance. We are not always aware how much our conduct or countenance may occasion any of the Lord's little ones to stumble.

We should cherish that state of mind in which we may be best prepared to perceive the warnings and checks of God's Holy Spirit. What should we do without them? We ought to watch that we may never do anything, or go anywhere, that may have the effect of robbing us of tenderness of spirit, or blind our sensibility to this influence. If this

sense were duly cherished by our young friends, they would not be found at places of diversion. Limits as to recreation and amusement are to be known by attending to the reproofs of the Spirit. The religion of the cross of Christ is not intended to rob us of the true happiness of life; but blessed is the man who feels that God Almighty does set bounds to our amusements.

At the Yearly Meeting in 1840,

He thought that it was not sufficiently borne in mind that the tendency of field-sports is to leaven into the spirit of the world; he believed that there were instances in which these amusements greatly lessen the religious usefulness of our members, and that it would be generally found that the renewed mind, even if they have been indulged in, feels it needful to relinquish them.

Recent circumstances have led Friends to appreciate the import of the words "Christian profession," and to satisfy them that the root of this profession is nothing less than the very truth as it is in Jesus. He expressed his warm and affectionate solicitude that Friends who were parents and guardians might be very clear and very faithful in their endeavours to train up the young in the love of our testimonies. Something may be done, even after the time when restraint ceases to be in their power, by persuasion and entreaty. They should not, on any occasion, manifest by word or example any doubt in their own minds; but seek to commend our Christian profession even in these things, as being what we cannot call in question the ground of, or part with any portion of, and yet maintain a good conscience towards God.

At another time, he alluded to the immediate visitations, the quickening influences, of the Holy Spirit. By this means God works in the hearts of his children and people. It is a most awful thing not duly to appreciate these visitations; he had feared that, having been frequently brought before us, it had become commonplace, and we did not consider what it is. It constitutes a part of the accountableness of man at the day of awful reckoning.

He spoke of truth, uprightness, and honesty, as inculcated both in the law and in the gospel. These things were deeply rooted in George Fox and his contemporaries. They broke off from the forms in which they had been trained. They could not countenance in themselves or in others forms of prayer, thanksgiving and praise, not suited to their present condition; they could not make these forms their own.

In 1841,

W. F. trusted there was an increase in the knowledge spoken of by the apostle, of a being baptized by one Spirit into one body. This might be accepted as an evidence that He who loved the church is still mindful of us. There is in Him a place of anchorage for our souls, and we might bid our fellow-believers put on strength in his name. Still, it was a day of suffering, and we must prepare for continuance in suffering, and be ready to pass through much tribulation for his name and truth's sake. But we might be comforted and strengthened in remembering that He told his disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation."

We might derive instruction from recurring to the words used by Friends from the beginning,—"a Christian profession." All that is peculiar to us might be referred to that origin. Friends did not take it upon themselves; but it was laid upon them through the immediate workings of the Holy Spirit; and we could not but desire that all around us might partake of it through the same divine influence; and be brought to see that it promotes the honour of Christ, and the true happiness of man. His church has always had to bear a testimony against the world, and to look to the high standard conveyed in the words, "They are not of the world, as I am not of the world." What is so calculated to bring us to see our shortcomings as this? The Spirit of God, as allowed to work, brings to this blessed end.

He felt for young men in retail trades; but wished them to be encouraged to omit nothing which would procure the peace of a good conscience. How remarkably the way had

been made for those who have been upright! Our Society could speak of no other than the narrow way; but we were to bear in mind that it leads to the city.

At times the prospect of better and brighter days presented, when our testimonies would be exalted with greater power and dignity in this land. It might be through much suffering both from the world and from the Church. At the same time he cherished a belief that the testimony to the right authority of Christ will be much more exalted in the church universal. Hence the wish that, in maintaining the testimony against tithes and all ecclesiastical impositions, we might not too hastily shrink from suffering.

He spoke of the blessedness, the sweetness, the peace and the comfort of a good conscience, alluding to that which so conspicuously adorned our forefathers. Their upright and downright honesty reached the witness in those with whom they were accustomed to trade. Theirs was a true Christian honesty, and a conscientious religious concern to be kept from involving the character of their profession, by contracting debts which they could not pay; they were content rather to begin in life, and to go on in that course in which they might enjoy the blessing, and in which their light might shine.

In 1843, he remarked that

He had meditated on the language of the ancient prophet —"Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth;" and spoke of the excellence, the very blessedness of truth. He added that our predecessors, after a dark night of apostacy, were brought to be sons of truth; and could not endure anything which they believed and knew to be out of the truth, and which they so often described as deceit.

They could not be found in any of the practices which tarnished the beauty of the truth. They considered these things as bonds and fetters binding them to the spirit of the world, and they not only came out of them, but bore their testimony against them. God gave them to see the full spirituality of the gospel; and thus they became

worshippers in the inner court. They knew what it was to feed upon that bread which came down from heaven.

May we in all our transactions prove ourselves to be sons of truth. O the sweetness, the excellence, of the true fear of God! O that we might be all brought to a true sense of it—come to that which limits and restrains; so that in the watchfulness of our lives, and the truthfulness of our words, we may answer the witness in others.

And again, on the same occasion, he said:—

In watchfulness and humility are to be heard the secret intimations, the gentle whispers, of the Spirit of Truth, as to the walk in life. To those who desire to walk uprightly and watchfully, the Lord giveth counsel in things temporal as well as spiritual: his limitations and guidance are known in reference to trade. Temporal things are kept in their proper places—we have power to live above the world; and to feel the world under our feet—treading upon the earth, and not covered by it. We then feel that we have higher and holier things to do than to devote all our faculties, and all our strength to temporal things. Being quickened to a sense of eternal things, we are not engrossed with the acquisition of outward treasure, but come to walk as strangers and pilgrims upon earth.

May it please the Great Head of the church to grant us more of a sense of the unity of the Spirit. The preciousness of this sense is evidenced in his prayer, and it is a further evidence that it is not possible for man to effect it. It is wholly his work, and it is that which He will effect in all who strive for it, diligently watching against everything that would break in upon it. Our great adversary envies this unity in the church, insidiously seeking to frustrate the work of the Lord on the earth.

May we be given up, more than may have been the case, to sympathize, not only in the adversities, but in the temptations, of others; and know more of this—that when one member suffers all the others suffer with it! Those who

study to be kept in the meek and quiet spirit know most of this.

Some may have suffered by their connexion with certain benevolent institutions; but it is not easy to fix our minds on any who have suffered by visiting the widows and fatherless, or by diligently attending to individual cases of distress, and visiting the habitations of the poor. There is something humbling in this, which preserves the mind from being carried away by popular applause. Many who do it, do it much hidden from the world, following the simple leadings of their Lord. The blessing which rests upon it should encourage Friends to a diligent attendance to these duties.

We have been favoured, on our coming together, to feel that there is a Foundation, something underneath; and to know in whom we have believed—altogether of his mercy! We have been made sensible of the owning of our Lord, unworthy as we are of this. There is that on which we can encourage one another to build, in confidence that the building will stand.

CHAPTER XXXV.

VISIT TO FRIENDS IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE—RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENTS IN BRITTANY.

WILLIAM FORSTER had long cherished a deep interest in the progress of true religion on the continent of Europe, both among Protestants and the adherents to the Papal system. A pleasing evidence of this occurs in a letter he wrote, some years before, to his friend J. J. Gurney, then on his first visit to France, &c.:—

I cannot help wishing (he says) I could tell thee how very much thou hast been in my mind, and with what sweet feelings of love and spiritual fellowship I have often visited thee within the last two or three weeks.

It is rather strange to be thinking of thee in France, &c. What a new atmosphere for thee to breathe! In the midst of Popery, and surrounded with the vanity of a gay and thoughtless world, there must be much to make thee sad, and enough to lead thee to wish for the spirit of grace and supplication availingly to pray for an increase of light upon them that sit in darkness, and for yet clearer views of the spirituality of our holy religion. But what a relief and comfort do we enjoy in being enabled sometimes to cherish hope in the mercies of the Most High, for such of his children as He has suffered to remain under the privation of the privileges and benefits which He has so largely heaped upon us, and to believe that, in measure, the Spirit of Christ is at work within them, where the exterior may but little indicate his operations. I have a strong feeling of interest and sympathy, and Christian love, for the poor Roman Catholics, and often wished that we

might be willing to become baptized (I think thou canst understand my meaning) into their state—to feel as Paul did—for the weak, for them that were under the law, and them that were without the law. Perhaps the darkest cloud I ever entered has been under the sense of that power by which the people are prevented, through human agency, from becoming acquainted with, and dependent upon, the workings and teachings of the Spirit of God, visiting the soul.

I don't know a subject of deeper interest than that of the extension of the kingdom of our Redeemer upon the earth. How, almost constantly, does my mind dwell upon it; how do I sigh, in secret, to be made a witness of more eminent manifestation of the power of God unto salvation, and of the raising of the standard of Christian purity and simplicity among the nations,—of a reformation in the professing church, and the diffusion of divine knowledge in the world; but how have I to feel that all must be of God, through grace and the influences of his Spirit! and individual faithfulness both in action and example must be steadfastly maintained, if ever the work is to go forward. There are but few with whom I feel inclined to converse on subjects of such deep interest. It may be long before we meet; but I must entreat thee to remember me in sympathy, and, as thou mayst be drawn to it, in prayer also.

The time had now arrived when he had himself to enter upon a series of religious engagements on the Continent. In the early part of 1844, in company with his friend A. A. Jenkins, a minister from Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., he paid a visit of Christian love to those who profess with Friends, and compose the little cluster of meetings in the South of France. They were occupied with this service a little more than two months.

During the intervals between one foreign service and another, his attention was still kept alive to

subjects of interest to the Christian philanthropist. Thus he writes:—

To Josiah Forster.

1844. *6th mo. 18th.*—What dost thou say to these horrors of the Chinese war? Ought we not to be doing something to make them known throughout the whole of Christendom? or in that part of the Christian world so called, which may be regarded as implicated in the evil, as the whole of the British nation certainly is. The wickedness of our late wars in the East is now become matter of history; and many people care as little about the deeds of those days as if they had been done by a former generation. I have long been wishing for a *histoire morale* of the Affghanistan and Scindian affair, and the same of the Chinese war, put forth in a small pamphlet for general reading. There is a little book lately published, I suppose but little known, and likely to be but little read: "A Great Nation's Little Wars," by Henry Lushington, a *critique morale et politique* on the late Indian wars. It is not up to the point on war, but is a long step towards it.

I have not much to add except to tell thee of a very interesting conversation I had with a sailor, on the coach between Colchester and Ipswich. He was not long since returned from a five years' cruise on the coast of Africa, and told me a great deal more than I had ever heard from an eye-witness of the atrocities of the slave-trade. He mentioned their capture of a schooner of eighty tons, with three hundred and eighty slaves on board, all children. We know nothing from Government of these captures; very little of the trade south of the line on the west coast; nor anything at all, other than incidentally, of what is passing on the east coast. It seems that they take the slaves, captured in those seas, to the island of St. Helena as a depôt, and from thence they are shipped off to the West Indies. If we acted up to the profession of our prospectus as an Anti-slavery Society, we should look after all these things, and endeavour to make ourselves acquainted with the disposal of every cargo of

captured negroes, and give all sorts of publicity to the trade. I think we could not do better than publish occasionally a broad sheet, if only in quarto, of the facts of the case as they are brought to light. People would read them, if they were given to them, or sent by post, when they would not travel through the length of the *Reporter*.

If happily that single cargo had been brought into the Thames, instead of being taken to the West Indies, only think what it might have done for our object!—how it would have roused the feeling of all sorts of people, from one end of Britain to the other! No sacrifice would have been thought too costly, nor any effort too great, to put a stop at once and for ever to this greatest of human abominations.

7th mo. 20th.—Till I read Lord Palmerston's speech, I supposed that the 120,000 victims included the total number of Africans annually destroyed by the slave-trade, and that only 36,000 lived to spend their days in slave-labour on the western shores of the Atlantic; whereas it is 360,000 instead of 120,000. Lord Palmerston gives the total loss of life in much larger figures. 150,000 landed in America,—"ravage committed on the population of Africa, 500,000." Peel's figures are, 100,000 landed in America; admitting that "the number sacrificed in the attempt to gain property in the blood and sinews of these unfortunate men is not over-rated." How bad are the effects of this barbarous traffic upon the Africans themselves, presenting a grievous and very formidable impediment to the spreading of the light of Christianity among the millions of that vast continent. I am almost constantly thinking of the subject; the numbers are utterly appalling; and my mind is so unequal to form an idea of the extent of the misery that I am altogether overpowered in the attempt.

William Forster had "had before him, more or less for many years," the prospect of paying a religious visit to some parts of Normandy, and other districts on the northern frontier of France; and the time was now drawing near when he believed it right

to prepare to enter upon this service. After having informed the Friends of his own Monthly Meeting of this apprehension of duty, and received their sanction, he writes to his brother:—

To Josiah Forster.

Friends took time to deliberate upon the concern—none too much—and came to the conclusion to order a certificate. I feel much lightened in spirit by having taken this step; and, thus far, have been mercifully kept from any misgivings respecting it. I shall probably have much yet to go through before leaving home, if the way should open for my going at all. At present I know of no companion, and feel somewhat restrained from seeking after one; nor can I imagine how I am to be provided with an interpreter.

Being duly furnished with all the needful certificates of the unity and concurrence of his friends with his present undertaking, he proceeded to France, by way of Southampton, the Isle of Wight, Guernsey and Jersey. He took out with him large supplies of Scripture selections, and tracts on the religious principles of Friends, on slavery, peace, &c. He felt anxious that correct information should be diffused regarding these and other important points of Christian doctrine and practice; and, in reference to the simple mode of worship adopted by the Society of Friends, he remarks:—"I wish to have it made apparent that our silent waiting is an exercise of mind very distinct from the contemplation and absorption of Guyon and her contemporaries."

On his way to Southampton, he writes

To Joseph Sturge.

7th mo. 26th.—As the time draws near for my leaving England,

I feel increasingly the importance and weightiness of the service I have in prospect. At times many fears and discouragements crowd in; but at other times, and often, I feel that love which has brought me, I trust, into a willingness to give myself up to the service of my Lord, bearing me onwards. And it is that which makes hard things easy, and rough places plain. If it may but abide with me, I ask no more.

Though acquainted with French, William Forster was not sufficiently familiar with the language to preach in it; and, joined by Edmund Richards, as companion and occasional interpreter, and by his young friend Henry Tuke, of York, he proceeded to Guernsey. Thence he writes:—

8th mo. 5th.—I was thoughtful, and for a while a little doubtful, whether I ought then to go to sea. My own inmost feeling rather imperatively pointed to our departure. I have need to be thankful it was so. It proved a stormy night, especially after we had made more than half our passage. The steward's mate, who evidently wished to make the best of everything, came down, about three o'clock, with "a tremendous sea;" and there was no need to tell us what the wind was. If we had not had a good ship, a hardy captain, and a powerful engine, I think it is a question whether we should have got through; and there would have been nothing very agreeable in running back for an anchor at Portland, much as we might have been glad of the shelter. I was thankful, but not thankful enough, when we were safely at anchor in Guernsey roads, about noon, on Seventh-day. I was mercifully kept, for the most part, in a submissive and hopeful mind; and I thought it a special favour there was nothing amongst us of agitation or alarm.

He held a meeting with the inhabitants of St. Sampson's Harbour, of which Edmund Richards reports that "the Wesleyan Meeting-house was well filled, and many serious people were among the

company. It was a solemn time. W. F. was led in the line of encouragement, and the meeting ended under a precious sense of the presence of the great Head of the Church."

From Guernsey William Forster passed on to Jersey, where he held several meetings. Of one of them his companion says:—

It was a highly favoured season. W. F. was enabled to sound an alarm to the unregenerate, careless sinner; and to proclaim the mercy and love of the Most High in the glad tidings of the gospel—the power of the Lord being in dominion over all.

Of another, held in the Baptist Meeting-house, he remarks:—

He was enabled to unfold the truths of the gospel in their purity, spirituality, and simplicity, under the influence and authority of their divine Author.

With the prospect of crossing over to France now before him, William Forster continues:—

I look with much inward trembling at the path before me; sometimes I could bring myself to doubt, whether I had fully counted the cost: at others, sympathy and love for the people I go to visit, smooths (the French have a word for it, "*applanir*," which we can scarcely fully translate) the ruggedness of the way, and I tread with firmer, and it may be with a lighter, step.

My coming here has very much answered the purpose I had hoped for, as it has seemed to a certain extent to open my way into the parts I have to visit, so far as information and letters of introduction can do it. And now I do not wish to know more than I do, nor to obtain any further credential; but in simplicity, with a watchful and submissive mind, to give myself up to the leadings of Him who, above all other things, I desire may be my guide.

Mallet arrived from St. Malo to-day, and brings a very interesting account of the people he has been visiting at Rennes; and whilst he was telling us of them, in came Le Sueur, just arrived from Granville, with a very touching account of the people he had been among at Chefréne. It brings me to a deep feeling of what I am, and how little there is in me likely to be a help or comfort to them; however, I believe I must go among them.

8th mo. 15th.—I trust I should be given up to come back from hence, if I could feel that a release were granted me. I have passed through much conflict and humiliation within the last fortnight; perhaps I never endured much more. I am not sure but it has done something towards breaking down my wilfulness, and that within me which is prone to rise up in judgment against the simple and gentle leading of Him who is "the Truth." What a mercy it will be to me in my helplessness, and in the midst of all I must expect to meet with from day to day, if He will but be pleased to put me forth, and to go with me; for then all must go well.

They left Jersey on the 18th, and the next day William Forster continues his narrative on French ground:—

8th mo. 19th. St. Malo.—A fine passage of rather more than four hours brought us here yesterday evening. We reached the quay of St. Malo just as the sun was dipping below the horizon: and a most beautiful sunset it was.

After some detention they proceeded on their errand of Christian love in Brittany; and W. F. resumes:—

8th mo. 23rd. Rennes.—I trust I may be allowed to accept it as a token of divine favour, altogether unworthy as I am; and one that I am sure I ought to hold in thankful remembrance, that at length I have reached this city in safety; and that, on entering upon the comfortable apartment in which I have

taken up my abode, I am in the enjoyment of much of that peaceful, home-like feeling which I often thought myself at liberty to anticipate in reference to some places in this land, long before I left home; and indeed long before I dared to speak of that which was resting as a burthen upon me.

When we were at liberty to leave St. Malo, which was not till after three long days of very trying detention, and part of the time of as much laborious exertion as I have gone through at any time for some years past, in arranging and repacking our baggage, books, &c.—after the ransack they made with all our things at the Custom-house—I thought I could not peacefully take any other route hither than round by Dinan, a town of 12,000 inhabitants *(Department du Côte du Nord)*; and it is said they have 600 Protestants there and in the neighbourhood.

We had determined on making a very early start on Fifth-day morning; but our carriage took so long to pack that it was full half-past eight o'clock before we got clear of the town. We had a good breakfast at an *auberge* at Chateau Neuf, about half-way, thorough French style, and arrived at Dinan early in the afternoon. We had no recommendation, and knew of nobody by name. I thought it would be most for my peace to try for a meeting among our own country-folks: for a while no way seemed to open for it; at length I asked my friends to go and tell the minister of the English congregation what we were come for. He received them civilly, and though not willing to allow us the use of the room they occupy, by his recommendation they got accommodation at the Hôtel de Bretagne, and we determined on appointing a meeting for this forenoon. They did their best in giving information of it at the boarding houses, &c.:—the meeting was formidable to me in prospect.

There was by no means a large gathering; yet, small as it was, I felt enough to satisfy me I had not gone there in my own will. And I thought the Lord was not far from us, whilst I was sitting in silence before Him, and whilst engaged in speaking of his love and power. The burthen of my spirit was to bear a plain-spoken testimony to Christ as the only

means provided for man's salvation. When the meeting was over I felt so much lightened in spirit, I thought there was little or nothing for us to do, but to make ready for our departure. I was carefully watchful for every opening to dispose of our books and tracts; and, considering the time we were there, we did distribute a pretty many, mostly among the French. At the *Etablissement des Frères* I left an ample supply on slavery and war, and of "La Serrure et la Clef." *

It is hard to say what may betide me here; and it is a true comfort to me that at present I scarcely wish to know. My present concern and desire is that I may be kept in a simple, watchful and devoted mind, given up to any and every opening that may present itself. I find it to be a day of small things; and it will be well for me if the humiliations and sufferings I have lately passed through, make me willing to give myself up to every little act of duty that I may have to believe is laid upon me.

Whether I shall find any openness towards me and my little service among the people I am come to visit must be left; but even if the testimony I have to bear be too simple for them, and should I even find them shut up against me as a weak, unworthy instrument, still I think I shall hardly dare to doubt that my coming here has been in our Saviour's love, and in obedience to what I have believed to be his will. I cannot but remember how long and how often they have been the objects of my sympathy and love; and it is something for me that I can now believe I have not ventured forth in a hasty or presumptuous spirit.

I have a good room, conveniently situated on the ground floor, a comfortable neat bed in a first-rate hotel, for two francs per night; dinner, *table d'hôte*, 2½ fcs.; *déjeuner à la fourchette*, 1½ fcs.

* A translation of a well-known pamphlet, by J. J. Gurney ("The Lock and Key"), which contains, in parallel columns, quotations from the Old Testament prophecies relating to the coming of our Lord and Saviour, with a short description of the purport of the prophecy, and a third column of references to the New Testament, showing their fulfilment.

24th. Seventh-day evening.—We have made ourselves known to some of the dear people here; and Barbazet, the minister, kindly allows us to hold a meeting with the few English residents in a room in his house at eleven o'clock to-morrow forenoon, and he manifests a readiness to show us the way to the residence of some of the people of his *petit troupeau.*

From Rennes they took a turn to the east, and visited Morlaix and Brest.

9th mo. 1st. Brest.—The last two weeks have been a time of many trials, much laborious exertion, and of anxiety and conflict of mind. In some favoured moments I have met with that which has quieted my mind in the belief that I am not here in my own will; and I think it a favour to be allowed to witness that which I have seen of the work of love in some of those with whom we have made a transient acquaintance, most of them poor, persecuted and despised, but rooted in that which makes them, in the midst of all, strong in love to their Lord.

I am very desirous that all we do in the way of distribution may be done with caution; and that it may be made as evident as our conduct can make it, that our object is entirely distinct from all party consideration, and everything connected with politics.

Thus far I have dealt out the books and tracts with a liberal hand. From place to place, I have been very watchful to embrace every opening; and if, in the course of the journey, I am guilty of spending a franc or two as I pass along in *marchandant,* for the purpose of getting access to the shopkeepers, I trust it will not be found to be money entirely thrown away. I cannot say that they are never refused, but of the hundreds that we have given away but few have been returned.

At Rennes we found a few serious, awakened, and enlightened people: we had a meeting with them on First-day evening in the dwelling-room of one of their little company, a working *cloutier.* They seemed willing to own us; and their visits at our hotel made me think of our friends at Nismes.

We met with much kindness and openness from J. Jenkins and his wife, at Morlaix; and the meeting at his house was one to be gratefully remembered: he kindly undertook to give the substance of what I might have to communicate. I thought it well done, and much to my relief and comfort. He is engaged in revising the translation of the New Testament in Breton, and is very desirous of making it as complete as possible. He has done much in the printing and circulating of tracts; and, being warm-hearted and liberal towards the natives, and withal of enlightened, well-tempered zeal, and much conscientiousness, I cannot but hope that he will be made useful in his station. I have seldom or never met with the same cordiality from a minister of any other denomination, as he manifested towards us from the first moment of our introduction.

My last little duty was to call upon the wife of a labouring carpenter, a native Breton, who is a member of their little church, and her husband also. Dear woman! she was at her *blanchissage;* as soon as she was apprised of my visit she came running up two or three pair of stairs. From the little I saw of her, I should say that she would be an ornament to any community in Christendom. On my speaking to her on the bringing up of her children in the fear of the Lord, I think I shall never forget the tenderness of her spirit and the heartiness of her reply, "*Je fais mon possible.*"

In the evening of the same day a meeting was held at the house of a widow. Most, if not all, who were present had been convinced of the errors and superstitions of the Romish Church without much outward instrumentality. Edmund Richards says, respecting it:—"The dear serious people were assembled when we entered; great solemnity prevailed throughout, and dear W. F. was largely engaged in unfolding gospel truths to a few awakened serious, seeking people, and in encouraging them to withdraw their dependence more and more from

man, and come to the teaching of the Spirit of Christ in their own hearts."

The following day they left Brest and proceeded by way of Quimper and Hennebon to Vannes. Edmund Richards speaks of a small meeting held at Quimper, as "a time of merciful visitation in gospel love;" and William Forster resumes his memoranda at Vannes:—

9th mo. 5th. Vannes.—My travels in Brittany have been interesting and instructive to me; at times much conflict of mind, many fears, but not many moments of distrust; generally a quiet submission to the humiliations and duties of the day; and earnest desires not to spare myself from full attention to every little opening to service. In unutterable mercy, after having borne the cross, and endeavoured to act in obedience to what I have believed to be laid upon me, I have had some momentary feelings of that quiet and relief of mind which, whether I am right or wrong in the importance I attach to it, I have ventured to accept as a token of our Saviour's care and love. This was remarkably the case on leaving Quimper yesterday. After having run myself almost off my legs in various little acts of duty, nothing would do for me but I must go out, in the hottest sun, to make a visit to the *sous-chef* (the principal was not at home) of the seminary for training young priests. I went alone, and was civilly and politely received. The Abbé, after apologizing for not showing me over the establishment, as he was pressed for time, walked part of the way with me on my return to the town; and we had very friendly conversation on subjects affecting the state of the slaves in the French colonies, &c. I had taken him tracts on Slavery and War, also "The Lock and Key." On my return I made up a large packet to be sent to the Abbé Gaugar, and, by permission, left them to be sent up to the seminary.

At Hennebon, I went to the house of a large *proprietaire* in the vicinity of the town, did my duty, at least I thought

so, and wrote him a note from our next stage, explanatory of the object of my travels, in order, if it were possible, to disabuse his mind of the idea he seemed to entertain, that political objects were the real and concealed motive.

At Ploermel they visited a large seminary conducted by the Abbé Lammenais for five hundred young Frères, training for *instituteurs*. Of this W. F. says :—

My visit was interesting, though not in every respect satisfactory. The Abbé was most polite, and on many points communicative. He has done much, and is yet doing great things, for the cause of education in Brittany, and for the French colonies also, but all in close connection with the Roman Catholic Church. He took every publication I offered with apparent interest; and gave me permission to send him more. I thought he really valued the Scripture maps. It is a most extensive establishment; but I was struck with the want of order. He is evidently so much the mainspring of the whole concern, that I should think it must fail at his decease.

I thought he knew but little of Friends; but, as we had to explain ourselves on some points, there was apparently a response in his mind to the statement we made as to the ground of some of our Christian testimonies—plainness and against war, especially.

After leaving Ploermel, they again spent a little time at Rennes, W. F. concluding his more public services there with a small meeting in the evening of the 12th of Ninth Month, in which, from his companion's account, he appears to have been largely engaged to preach the truths of Christian redemption, and to insist with much force upon their practical application.

After visiting " a poor sick woman, confined to her

bed, and her sister who nursed her, to whom William Forster imparted much consolation, encouraging them to place their dependence and cast all their care upon their Lord and Saviour, who, he felt assured, loved them and cared for them," they left Rennes and proceeded to Ponterson. Thence W. F. writes home :—

9th mo. 13th. Ponterson.—I wonder whether you will be as well pleased as I am that at length I have found my way into Normandy. We got clear of Rennes about noon to-day. We had a pleasant afternoon for our journey; and part of the way through a beautiful, well-cultivated, and thoroughly English country; and are now housed for the night in a small French hotel, with good fire, good supper, and good beds. I cannot regret my journey in Brittany; but it was a time of no small trial to me, both of body and mind. It is the Wales of France; and I thought I could discover some similarity to the Welsh in their manners, national features, &c. But the *Bas Bretons* are far from being up to the standard and morals of Wales. Some of their costumes I thought pretty; but to see everybody dressed alike from day to day, soon becomes monotonous; and, like all other monotony, it wearies one. They have a pretty breed of cows, and in their narrow valleys beautiful grass meadows, from which they furnish a large supply of the best of butter to other parts of France. I imagine that when the peasantry became possessed of the soil at the time of the Revolution, they had but little capital to furnish themselves with the conveniences almost indispensable to country life. What with their poverty and intemperance (for they are almost proverbially a drunken people), they have made very little progress in agriculture, or in civilized life generally. I think it must be a cold country; for, though so many degrees to the south of our latitude, I hardly saw a single native plant that is not common to the north of England.

For the first two or three evenings we could not bear

ourselves without a fire; afterwards, for a few days, the weather became scorching hot. The country people were everywhere threshing corn; sometimes on the roadside, but mostly on their earthen threshing-floors, close to their own habitations, in groups of six, eight, or ten; and it was quite amusing to see how well they handled the flail; and though they worked so close together, how cleverly they managed not to break each other's legs.

The priests have almost unlimited power over the country population; and, in many respects, I should consider the Bretons quite as superstitious as the lowest class of Irish; but education is making some progress, and I think the best results may be anticipated from a more general circulation of the Scriptures. We must lend a little aid by the printing of some scripture books—miracles, biography, &c.; and, if we can only do as much as that, I shall not think my journey thrown away.

Williams, of Quimper, who is from Wales, received me with the greatest cordiality. We had a meeting in his parlour with the greater part of his congregation, mostly Swiss, in which E. R. interpreted for me.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENTS IN NORMANDY, ETC.

HAVING now entered another of the ancient provinces of France, William Forster was closely occupied in Christian efforts to promote the Redeemer's cause among its inhabitants. About three months were spent in this labour of love in various districts of Normandy and parts adjacent. The following extracts from his letters during this time, mostly to his wife, give some interesting particulars :—

9th mo. 15th. Avranches.—We had a warm, pleasant morning for our excursion to Mont St. Michel, and enjoyed the ride; part of the way was very bad, over land which seemed to have been recovered from the sea—beautiful edges of tamarisk. The Mount is almost a complete counterpart of Michael's Mount, off the Cornish coast; but I think it must be twice the distance from the shore. The sands are very extensive, in some places dangerous, but, in the course we took, hard and good.

We took an old woman as our *valette de place*, who conducted us, by a circuitous route, to the porter's lodge. I sent in my passport, and after waiting some time in the guard-room, where I gave pretty many of our Scripture books to the soldiers, a gendarme came to conduct us over the prison, which is principally formed out of a large, old, monastic establishment built upon the top of the Mount. There was much worth seeing in the building; but the prisoners were my object, and we could only get to see very few of them. The Grand Salle, a most noble room, is fitted up as a

weaving-shop, full of looms; had the men been at work we could not have seen it. However, he took us into the school-room and the yard of the infirmary, where the *invalides* were airing themselves.

I asked permission to say a few words of kindness to some of the old men; but he would not allow us to go near them. I was then importunate for an interview with the *Directeur:* at last, after some delay, we accomplished that point; and a most agreeable and interesting interview it was. I began by asking liberty to send a few books for distribution among the prisoners, particularly for those taught in the school. He kindly granted permission; and, if he found nothing to object to, he promised that they should have them. We then had a long conversation upon the moral state of the prisoners, and on that which had passed under his own eye in reference to their improvement. His report was certainly much more favourable than anything we had heard at Brest. I met with nobody there who manifested anything like the same interest in the poor *galériens* that he takes in those under his care. He spoke of two instances in which the men had made some restitution in cases of theft. But nothing pleased me so much, nor gave the same evidence of the sincerity of his feeling, as the mention of his endeavours to follow those whose term had expired, and to ascertain their conduct in after life. The longer we were with him the greater openness he manifested. There are from 500 to 600 prisoners, young and old; many of them condemned for life. He took no small pains to correct the statements which have recently engaged public attention as to the effect of their discipline on some of the state prisoners. By his account their physical comforts are as much attended to, and as carefully provided for, as in England. But solitude must be hard to bear under any circumstances.

On our return to Ponterson I sent the *Directeur* a packet of pamphlets; and some books as a present for himself. On my showing him "La Serrure," and "Les Prophéties," and expressing my apprehension that part of the crime and immorality of France was to be attributed to the infidelity so general among the French, I thought there was a real response to

the sentiment; and he seemed to take quite as much interest in that part of the subject as I could have expected, as no doubt he is a decided Catholic.

After a visit to the *Maître de l'Ecole*, with a copy of "La Serrure," and some other books, and a most curious conversation with him, in which he seemed to think there were no other Christians in the British Empire than the Irish Catholics, and in which I took some pains to establish my own unworthy claim to the title, we parted on good terms. I then took the "Esclavage" to the mayor's—the Bureau de Poste, and to some of the principal shopkeepers; and came away with the feeling of having, in my little way, done the best that I could.

Our road to this town was through a beautiful champaign country, richly-wooded, well-cultivated, with snug, warm farms, good horses, good cattle, orchards, meadows, and corn land. The people were either coming from market, or threshing their buckwheat.

We have kept indoors much of the day—our little meeting in the morning was not to me lost time. At the *table-d'hôte*, to say the least of it, my anti-slavery paper excited some attention to the subject of slavery.

From Avranches they made a circuit through Coutances, Periers, and Bayeux, to Caen. W. F. proceeds with the narrative:—

9th mo. 19th. Coutances.—I have waited upon the mayor this morning; he received us very courteously, and seemed disposed to converse upon the subject of slavery, and made inquiry about Friends. I have been sending him a parcel of our tracts.

The *vacance* of the *Grand Seminaire* is just over; their young men have been coming in by every conveyance all through the day. It has been deeply interesting to me to see them. Dear fellows! I have an inexpressible yearning of spirit towards them, and could earnestly long to make them sensible of it. There is, in many of them, an air of refinement

and good breeding which bespeaks a much higher standard than anything I thought I could discover among the young priests at Lyons. But it is no use to think much about them, as it is next to impossible to get at them; unless now and then I meet with one or two in the streets or on the road. I have got the "Serrure" and "Les Prophéties" put into neat covers; and they make a good present for young people. Anything that leads to the reading of Scripture and the searching of Scripture is, in my estimation, most important to the young in France, both Protestant and Catholic; and, as far as it goes, they very much meet the concern and exercise of my mind. I also value the Scripture maps for the same purpose; so much so that I should rejoice to get six more from the depository of the Christian Knowledge Society; and the same number of the Scripture Atlas of the Tract Society.

24th. Periers.—Just now, perhaps, it is enough for me, far more than I deserve, that I have a little humble confidence, a gentle hope, that I am still kept in the way into which I have not brought myself. O that I could be sure, as sure as I sometimes wish to be, that it is the way of the Lord's leading!

I went to St. Lo, in the belief that it would be to my relief and comfort to put myself in the way of the principal people of the place. I got a sort of clue to them one after another; and in the course of First-day and yesterday I went to several of their officials, and met with nothing but civility, or rather complaisance; and possibly my humiliation may have been the means of making us, and what belongs to us as a religious Society, a little more known.

Yesterday was a large fair at St. Lo; and the Préfet came to town on the occasion; I thought it laid upon me to make an attempt to see him. He was coldly polite, asked a few questions in reference to the extent of our visit, &c. On my making some short allusion to our not uncovering our heads on entering the room, he spoke kindly, as if he were not disposed to take offence. I thought it evident he had no

inclination to throw any obstacle in our way; and that was as much as we could expect. I had much trembling of mind before I went to him, and was glad enough to have it over.

The Avocat Catonier, who is, I suppose, from what he told us, head of the bar, made many inquiries, and politely agreed to accept a few books; I also sent a parcel to another of their principal lawyers. I went through some trial in reference to my visit to the Superior of the *Grand Seminaire*, at Coutances. I went in what I believe to be the way of my duty, and in a tender, loving spirit towards him and the young people of the establishment, and endeavoured to keep close to the points of interest that took me there—*esclavage*, and the reading and searching of the Scriptures; but it was hard to keep from digression to the object of my visit in France—the points of difference between us, &c.

The Librarian was present; I thought him a man of a more cultivated mind, and more tender in spirit than the Superior; but in that I might be mistaken. They accepted a set of maps, and allowed me to send a few copies of "La Serrure" for the students, and a few books for their library. After we had taken leave of him, with a very warm expression that I might become a good Catholic, he followed us to the library, and was very polite and friendly in his attentions.

I saw many of the young men in the garden and about the place; and a most tenderly touching sight it was to me. The Librarian spoke of them with interest, and in terms by which I thought he wished to imply that they were of modest and virtuous conduct.

It was amusing, and at the same time affecting and instructive, to hear with what pleasure and gratulation the Superior could speak of the progress of Puseyism in England; plainly declaring that, though professedly members of the Church of England, they were advocating the principles of the Church of Rome. It was not for me to deny the assertion, much as it did make me ashamed of the apostacy and folly of my countrymen to be obliged silently to assent to the truth of it. They would see how little we are advocating their views when

they come to read the books I sent them; and they must be read before they can be denounced.

Chefrêne is far from being so inaccessible from this place as I had been led to suppose. A moderate walk, part of it dirty enough, brought us there between ten and eleven o'clock. Le Sueur (a French Protestant minister) had given them a pretty fair description of the nature and object of our visit; and we found them quite prepared to receive us with a hearty welcome. We settled down to a good little *réunion*; then went to their next-door neighbour, a labourer, sickly, and in poverty; then to a single man, in poor health; afterwards we paid a visit I shall not soon forget, nor will they, if they felt only a little of that which I felt on sitting with them; for, in unutterable mercy, I had such a sense of the love and power of God in Christ Jesus, that it was no easy thing for me, in my poor broken way, to express what I had to say. Before we left them, they gave us a list of their little *troupeau*, which amounts to twenty-six different families; some of them live at a considerable distance.

Periers, 27th.—Yesterday we had a long day among the dear people at Chefrêne; to-day we have visited the few families of Protestants at Montabot (an adjoining commune), have come back to Chefrêne, making one visit on our road home, in which I felt myself deeply interested.

They are all of them *propriétaires* or occupiers of small farms, working hard for a living, but in the enjoyment of the substantial comforts of life, far more than the small farmers in the north of Ireland, and more so, perhaps, than many of the small working farmers in England. The country reminds me very much of our parts of Dorsetshire—I think not quite so hilly—its small enclosures, hedgerows full of timber, deep shady lanes, rich grassy meadows, an abundance of orchards, and very much the same kind of fruit for cider. Their houses not quite so good as those of the small farmers in Bradpole and Loder; but better than many of the cottagers'; good outbuildings, the barns and houses well thatched.

I should imagine that until they came to Sabatier's care (a Protestant minister), they had been much neglected,

perhaps for generations. Most of the old people cannot read, and the young ones have not had much done for their education. I think them poorly supplied with the Scriptures; and I could find very few other books among them. I have been impressed by a sense of quick perception and native talent, especially in some of their old people; and, in the midst of all their rusticity and homeliness of life, there is a grace and sweetness of manner that is extremely pleasing. They are all of them nearly related. I cannot get at much of their history, further than that they have been Protestants for many generations; and they seem to have some tradition of the sufferings of their forefathers. To have been so remarkably preserved a distinct and separate people, in the midst of some of the grossest superstitions and corruptions of Popery, and with so little intercourse as they have had with other Protestant communities, appears to me to be a remarkable instance of providential care; and I cannot discover any traces of their having been infected by the infidelity of the French Revolution, much as it still prevails in some of the neighbouring towns. We have thus far been received in every family with much kindness and openness; and in many instances they have cheerfully left their occupations in the field to come and sit down with us; and, though we and our visit must have seemed very strange, to their young people especially, I have never noticed the smallest indecorum. Indeed, no Friends' children could have conducted themselves with greater quietness and good order. And in some instances, during the few moments we have spent in stillness, there has been to my apprehension the feeling of much sweetness and solemnity. I have seldom found it necessary to put their patience to the test by a long silence; and I have had the hope that, through an interpreter, they have caught a sense of the exercise of my mind; indeed, I trust this has generally been the case, and I think it has been evident in every instance, often by their expression in parting from us, that they accepted it as a visit of love.

29th. Bayeux. First-day evening.—Our visit at Chefrêne wound up well. Some of our visits on Sixth-day morning

were as interesting as any we had made. We parted from them all in much love. Some of these dear people are so much to my liking, that it goes hard with me to think that I shall probably never even hear from them again. They sadly need a Protestant school. I have seen so much of the influence of the communal schools as to bring me very tenderly to feel with conscientious Protestants; for, though professedly liberal, the books and the instruction given to the children have a decided bearing in the opposite direction.

I had enough to do to get through all I thought it right to attend to at St. Lo yesterday, but at last had the happiness of coming off with an easy mind. My visit to the Maître de l'Ecole-Mutuelle was perhaps the most to my satisfaction, who, though evidently Catholic, entered warmly into the object of "La Serrure," and in strong terms expressed his value for the Scriptures; very differently from an apparently well-educated man I met with at our table d'hôte, who said he had never read the New Testament, and spoke of the French materialism as if it were his own—that man had not to do with anything but that which related to this world, and that all his existence ceases with the last breath that escapes his body—that religion was entirely the concern of the women; and if now and then the men on particular occasions should go to fêtes and processions, it was only out of "*complaisance aux dames.*" An officer I met with on the sands at Granville, an intelligent, reflecting man, spoke of those horrid notions as being the prevalent infidelity of his associates in the army.

I went through so much before I left home that I have to watch lest it all go for nothing; and that, unfit as I have often thought myself for all that has been laid upon me, and all that I may have before me, I do not refuse to follow where I have to believe I am led.

Referring to the engagements of the last few days, Edmund Richards remarks that Testaments were given to the children, and that much love was expressed by those who had been visited, adding:—

Thus, in the course of four days, thirty separate religious

visits were accomplished in a line of labour altogether new, and amongst a people who were strangers to Friends, to their principles and peculiarities, but not to that principle of divine love under the influence of which the minds of many of the visited were prepared to receive the gospel message. Their spirits were made thankful under a sense of the goodness and mercy of the Most High, in sending his devoted servant from a distant country to administer the word of his counsel and encouragement, giving him that spiritual discernment in which he was enabled to divide the word aright.

On arriving at Caen, William Forster says :—

9th mo. 30th. Caen.—We were politely received by the *Sous-préfet* at Bayeux, and he conversed with us for some time on slavery. The Bishop with much kindness allowed me to say what I wished; he promised carefully to read a copy of the "Esclavage." On my leaving, I ventured to express a word or two of good desire for him, in love and much tenderness of spirit, to which he responded, and made some short expression of good will and good wishes.

The Principal of the *Grand Seminaire* was not to be seen. We had conversation with the *Directeur;* he promised to distribute some copies of the "Esclavage" to the young men. Our subsequent conversation was not so satisfactory; he spoke, in the broadest terms, of the exclusive authority of the Church of Rome to interpret Holy Scripture; and, in effect, that it was of more importance that people should be brought to faith in the authority of their church than to a right apprehension of the divine character of our Lord. I could not be sorry I went; but to me it was a baptism into a cloud of darkness and distress, which must be felt to be understood. I then had a pretty long walk to the *College Provinciale;* it is their vacation; the Principal was from home, but I found some young people from Martinique staying there, who were interesting to me; one of them the son of a very large slaveholder. As I thought the way was open for it, I sent some books on war, slavery, and Christianity, for the Principal and the young people.

I took a look at the *tapisserie*, to which I did not give many minutes, but they were enough for my purpose. It is an interesting and extraordinary piece of antiquity; but its warlike character was, as such things never fail to be, very depressing to me, and I cannot say that I wish to be divested of the feeling, though it often brings me acute suffering.

In reference to my coming here, and the time I may think it right to sojourn in this city, Matthew x. 16 has been much before me; and I trust I shall be careful to keep it in mind; or rather I should say the last clause, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves;" for in great mercy my heart is often made too tender, in what I take to be Christian charity, towards the people I am come to visit, to think I see much of the wolfish spirit in them.

After a week's close engagement in various Christian labours, among the people of Caen, and the surrounding district, he writes:—

8th.—I have had but rather a low and a heavy day; however, as I cannot charge myself with having neglected any opening to duty, I must try to be content under the sense of my unprofitableness, and seek to dwell more and more upon the watch for every, the most gentle, intimation that may, in gracious condescension, be granted me of the will of our Lord. The little I find to do in these large towns is, to no small extent, fatiguing to me, as, for want of knowing our way, we often have to go the ground over and over again.

Yesterday we had a meeting to ourselves in the forenoon; and I trust the time was not thrown away, as it relates to myself. In the evening we had a meeting in our apartments, in which I thought there was much of that to be felt amongst us, which, in my estimation, goes far towards making a good meeting. There were some interesting people at it; the Wheatcrofts (he is professor of English in the college); Lucas, the Wesleyan minister; Adolphe Harding, *negociant*, an active, religious, and useful man; Martha Harris, a young woman, governess in the family of the mayor, and who seems to have

great place with serious and well-minded people at Caen; and the Earl of Cavan and his sister. I called on the mayor, who is Protestant; he has promised me a list of the names of influential people upon whom I may call.

11th.—On Third-day we got to a large, cold house, and had far from the most comfortable accommodation in other respects. It was at the village of Luc, a small watering-place on the coast, and I suppose, much frequented in the summer months. About two or three miles across the country brought us to Cresseron. Our first halt was at the house of a widow in connexion with the Methodists; it was a visit in which I had some comfort, and we got her son to show us the way to the houses of the Protestants in the village. We left a few books as we went along; and here and there I asked for a little quiet, and endeavoured to communicate that which arose upon my mind; and I thought that in every place it was well received.

It was afternoon by the time we reached Periers. We stopped at the entrance of the village, at the house of Anne Lucas, a warm-hearted, humble-minded and devoted Christian, possessed of a comfortable independence, but living in the most simple way, that she may have wherewith to help the needy. She would have us take some refreshment; and, though infirm, and scarcely able to stand, she came down stairs to sit at coffee with us. Dear woman! her heart was full; and out of her abundance, with many tears, she said much of her love to her Saviour, and spoke in thanksgiving and praise of what the Lord had done for her. She has a kind and simple-hearted woman boarded with her. Our little reunion was a time not soon to be forgotten by me. Our Saviour's love to the two sisters at Bethany was much before me; and there was such a precious sense of openness and tenderness of spirit, it was hard to say whether I went to minister or to be ministered unto.

Her companion was our conductor to some families in the village; first to a rich widow lady, where I thought the truth made some way; and then to two other houses. In one of them we found a poor dear woman in a far advanced stage of

cancer, evidently sustained and comforted by her Lord. It was late when we had got through our visits.

We had a safe and peaceful ride back to Caen. Our charioteer (for we had to hire a cabriolet, the roads being too bad for our own carriage) was a lively, cheerful Frenchman, so very fond of his horse, and so kind to him, scarcely touching him with the whip. "*Allez, allez, Monsieur Marmot, voyons, allez,*" turning to us with so much glee to tell us how well the horse understood him. Our own hired house was quite a home to me when we arrived late and tired.

This morning we held our own meeting, and I made a visit to Lucas which was to my relief and comfort; then attended to some other service, partly in the same line; and went to see the Orphan Institution lately established by the Abbé Le Veneur, in which I was much interested. The Abbé is a young man of one of the principal families in Caen; he has fifty boys under tuition, working at different trades; *ebénistes, cordonniers, tailleurs, tourneurs, brossiers.* Considering that the school has been opened but two years, and that many of the children are quite young, and taken from the lowest walks in life, I thought the boys had made wonderful progress in their different trades; and, though but a small portion of time is devoted to study, their attainments did not appear to me to be far short of many whose whole time is devoted to school-learning. They have a large garden, in which a few of the boys are employed; and another class work upon the farm. I wished to have seen them, but there was not time for it.

After we had spent some time in looking over the place, we had a few moments' conversation with the Abbé in his own apartment. He is a pleasing young man, humble-minded, and communicative: he holds the religious education of the boys entirely in his own hands; and it is of course decidedly Catholic.

12th.—I am endeavouring, in a very small way, and in much weakness, to follow the light that is granted me from day to day; and I believe I do not spare myself. One of the engagements of the day was a visit to the Normal

School. The director was most kind and friendly and communicative, and I was much interested by all that I saw. If the religious instruction were more in accordance with what I believe to be the principles of Christianity, there would to my apprehension be nothing left to desire. There are seventy-seven young men under a course of good wholesome training, to take the place of schoolmaster in the department of Calvados, in which there are 552 schools; and the supply they receive from the Normal Establishment averages twenty-five per annum. They are mostly the sons of *cultivateurs*—small tenants. The decorum, moral order, and general appearance of the young men, was most satisfactory. Couchel, the *directeur*, gave me leave to send a supply of the "Esclavage" which I wish to give to the elder of the *elèves;* and though he did not object to my sending the "Serrure," he gave me to understand that it must pass under the inspection of their religious instructor, the resident *prêtre;* however, I shall venture them, and some Scripture maps too. If happily the young men, now rising up into life in this country, might be allowed to exercise their fine talents in unfettered, serious, and well-directed searching of the Holy Scriptures, it is not for us to say how soon a brighter and better day might break forth upon this richly favoured land.

This has been rather an unusually low day with me; possibly I may have given way to some impatience; and be a little too earnestly longing to get to the end of my travels. It is seldom that I venture to dwell much upon what may be before me; unless it be in that love which wrought me into a willingness to come hither, my mind is not strong enough to bear it. I find my strength and peace of mind very much to consist in keeping steadily and devotedly to what I believe to be the work of the day.

We have been into the country again, and were made welcome at the house of the Letelliers, at Beuville; and I was thankful to feel something of what I apprehend to be implied in the language of our Lord, Luke x. 6, "And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again." They have no children, but have

adopted a very sweet and interesting boy as their son, and would not allow us to settle down together till they had sent to a neighbouring village to fetch him from school. I must confess I had begun to get very anxious and fidgetty, as the forenoon was spending fast; but when the boy came I soon found that they were in the right; and if I had not gone for any other purpose than to see that dear child, I believe I ought not to look upon my time as thrown away.

We had a very good sitting with the family, at least I thought so; and the *maîtresse de famille* went to show us the way to some of her neighbours. I did not find the same comfort in every house; but we wound up the day with a poor widow and her daughter, who, both of them I thought, knew their Saviour, and loved Him too. Our friends entertained us with generous hospitality, and invited us to go there again to-morrow.

13th.—At the meeting at Periers I was helped to labour with faithfulness, and a sense of our Saviour's love prevailed. There was a large company of people; and so much quiet overspread the assembly, that I am not sure but we might have spared the little explanation of our mode of public worship, which I requested E. R. to give the people. But Lucas, who gave us his company, evidently in sympathy and love, thought it almost indispensable. So much was opened upon my mind, and I had such a sense of that power which is not of myself, that I should have been most thankful to have spoken direct to the people; but I trust they got some understanding, and some feeling too, of that which I was concerned to utter. Lucas kindly gave the substance of my prayer at the close of the meeting; and, by what he said afterwards, it was evident that he did not think that all had gone for nought. We stopped and had some refreshment at the Letelliers'; and returned home in good time in the afternoon.

I thought I felt myself fully excused from any meeting at Caen for the evening; but E. R. went to ask permission to make a visit to an English boarding-school in the town, kept by the daughters of a family with whom he had some

acquaintance in Guernsey. They readily granted my request, and it turned out to my relief and comfort; it appeared to be a thoroughly respectable and well-ordered establishment. The young people were serious and attentive, and I trust there was openness to receive what I thought it right to communicate. It had been a burthen upon me for some days, and I am thankful to have got through with it.

14th.—I have had a long and rather wearisome day, going from house to house among the principal people of the place. I am very desirous that I may not be setting myself to work; but if it were so I think I should not feel such a sense of pressure of mind to pursue the path into which I have believed myself to be led. At the close of the day we made a very interesting visit to one that I take to be a serious family; afterwards to a poor English teacher, whose wife was buried this afternoon, leaving him with four little children.

15th.—Our good friend Jenkins, of Morlaix, breakfasted with us on his return home from Paris; and we had a pleasant time together. I have been out among the people almost all day. I have reached nearly the end of my list, and believe that my time in this city is drawing fast to a close; and yet I cannot be sure but that I must be given up to some further humiliation to-morrow.

Here and there I seem to get a little into the interior of the Catholic church. In the midst of much superstition and reliance upon man, and, to my apprehension, a very confused and imperfect knowledge of true Christianity, there is much piety, great *dévouement*, and a desire after a good conscience towards God and man. I was much impressed with this on two or three visits I made to-day to persons of family and distinction; and was brought to much more tenderness of spirit, in my momentary intercourse with them, than I often feel in the company of worldly-minded Protestants, much as, in the good ordering of Providence, they may be blessed with a larger measure of light and knowledge.

16th.—In the course of the day I have had the comfort and blessing of a peaceful feeling that the time of my tarriance in this city is drawing fast to a close, and that we are now at

liberty to prepare for our departure. We held our meeting this morning: afterwards, I made a visit to the *Grand Séminaire*. The *Supérieur* came to us at the door, was civil, and offered, with apparent willingness, to distribute the "Esclavage" among the elder students, if I would leave them in his hands, which is all I could desire, or rather I did not hope for more. I went again to the *Ecole Normale*, and then to the *College Royale*; we obtained an interview with the *Proviseur*, the head of the establishment, and had some interesting conversation with him. As I endeavoured to hint at one or two points that rested much upon my mind, happily he caught a sense of my concern, and made such a response to what I wished to communicate, that, on withdrawing from his apartment, I felt so much relieved from what had been to me a heavy burthen, that I could have wept tears of thanksgiving. I was not idle during the remainder of the day: in such a place, or indeed in any place, to stay till I could find nothing to do, or nobody to visit, would be to take up my abode for life. I think it a great favour to have had my path of duty pointed out to me, and especially to feel that which satisfies me that I have done the little I have had to do, and that I am at liberty to move onwards; which is, I trust, a move homewards, though not in quite so direct a line as I could desire.

17th.—We have been to tea with some English people, and had a good evening: that is, perhaps, saying a good deal, and yet, I trust, not too much. The son of one of the principal merchants of the town, Alfred le Cavalier, made us a visit this morning; he understands English well, and manifested considerable openness to receive that which I thought was laid upon me to communicate to him. I now feel, to a great degree, relieved of every burthen; and look forward in hopes that I may be favoured to leave the place with a quiet mind. I believe that my coming here was not in my own will; and it has been much my concern, from day to day, to stand open to every, the smallest, intimation of duty, and carefully to attend to it. I have passed through some humiliations hard to my nature to endure, and a sense of utter unprofitableness has been almost the abiding feeling of my

mind; but now and then I have thought that I had some little confidence that I was owned of my Lord in my willingness to suffer for his sake; and I am sure this, in ever so small a measure, is far beyond anything that I deserve.

18th.—We have had a full day, in packing, clearing out, &c., and hope to get off to-morrow. The weather is cold and wet, and almost winterly: indeed I have seldom known a colder and more comfortless autumn in any part of England. I am leaving Caen with a quiet mind, not with the apprehension that my coming here has done much for the cause of truth, or been of much use to anybody; but I believe I have been watchfully and devotedly attentive to every little opening to service, and earnest in desire that I might be helped to a humble, consistent walking before the Lord.

11th mo. 3rd. Falaise.—We had enough to keep us fully employed to nearly the last minute of our time at Caen. The *Proviseur* of the college had sent me a long list of the names of the professors and masters, and, as I wished to send to each of them a copy of the "Esclavage," one of my last little services was making them up in envelopes, and taking them to the *concierge*. The morning was pretty much spent before we were clear of the town: at last I came off with a peaceful mind, but with little short of a painful feeling of my utter unprofitableness and unworthiness; but that did not prevent me from enjoying the journey.

I shall not soon forget the time I spent at Caen, nor some of my exercises and trials of faith. Taking the Protestants as a body, I found but little to comfort me: there seemed to be much of a worldly mind among them. This of course does not escape the notice of the Catholics, and they industriously turn it to their own advantage.

It is a most affecting consideration, and one much to be felt and deplored, that the state of a large proportion of the Protestants is far from recommending the cause of truth to the acceptance of the people. There are Catholics whose acquaintance I should be much inclined to cultivate were I to

live there: they appeared to me to be much more open to sympathy, and of a larger charity, than many of those who make profession of a purer faith.

4th.—I am not sure that I see light in any other direction than towards Alençon; therefore, I believe, I must seek to be kept in a resigned mind, and to be cheerfully given up to go thither to-morrow. O that in great mercy my steps may be ordered in that wisdom which cannot err! I never remember to have felt the same earnest, suppliant spirit for the leading of the true Light as in the course of the present journey; nor ever more given up to do and to suffer according to that which may be laid upon me.

I had a day of very close occupation; and having presented myself at the houses of all the people of influence and importance in Foluck and Gurbray whose names I could obtain, with but one exception, and seen a great many persons, I am relieved, and hope I may be allowed to leave the place with a quiet and peaceful mind. Falaise is not a very large town—some manufactories, and principally *bonneterie.*

There are but two whole families of Protestants—the rest Catholics; and to use the significant term of our *pharmacien*, in speaking of his neighbours:—"No Protestant, no Catholique—philosophe." And we may suppose what that means.

Like many other towns where the Catholics are not in constant collision with the Protestants, I have thought I could discern more of an open friendly feeling than in some other places. I fell in with a young *prêtre* this morning—very friendly, and I suppose of good report. They speak of him as a *brave homme, bon garçon.* How it makes my heart ache to think of the wicked deeds of that system which is to keep him a *garçon*, a bachelor, to the end of his days!

The principal of the college was very friendly: one of the classical professors also, and the *Procureur du Roi.* I called upon the *Sous-prefêt* to-day: I had to wait some time in the bureau for admission: he saw me for a few moments, asked me some questions, but made no attempt to stop my progress. Here is a capital *Ecole Mutuelle*—five classes reading De

Sacy's New Testament—two classes sacred history, Catholic of course—and the upper class La Fontaine's Fables. The master, a fine fellow, said he kept the religious instruction of the *elèves* in his own hands, and that the priests did not attempt to interfere; which is more than can be said in most places: there is an *Ecole de Frères*, said to be well-conducted; but I could not get to it.

This is a place very interesting to the antiquarian and historian; and it is quite curious and amusing to hear with what interest and importance the people talk of *Guillaume le Conquerant* (he was born at Falaise), as if their Duke of Normandy had only just made conquest of England;—they the conquerors, and we a subdued people. My time, and mind, and heart are much more given up to the present living generation, and those that are in suffering, and those rising into life, than to the past and gone-by; yet, if I were at liberty for it, I see much that would be very interesting to me in all the towns in Normandy.

Beyond the last date no letters from William Forster have been found to furnish further particulars of his gospel labours in this journey. From the notes of his kind companion, Edmund Richards, it appears that they proceeded by Alençon and Rouen to Amiens, holding religious meetings among the Protestants, and visiting in the neighbourhood of each city two philanthropic establishments, one for poor orphans, and the other for juvenile delinquents, placed under the care of Roman Catholics, for the purpose of training them so as to be qualified to earn an honest livelihood, and to be useful members of the community. They tarried some days at Amiens, or its neighbourhood, and were diligently employed in distributing the anti-slavery pamphlet from house to house. In the course of their stay here they went into the country to hold meetings

among the Protestants. The following extract from Edmund Richards' notes supply some interesting particulars of this service:—

11th mo. 22nd.—We obtained the names of some of the elders among them, and a few lines from the ancient Protestant minister Carteul, to Baptiste Watur, desiring him to render us what assistance we might require; and, packing up some tracts and books to take with us, we proceeded in a cabriolet to Esbarre, four or five leagues distant from Amiens.

23rd.—B. W. came to us early this morning, and undertook to have all the necessary notice given in the respective villages, that the Protestants at Varley should be invited, and that he should return to us in time to guide us across the village to Valencourt, about four miles distant, to the meeting this evening.

After having made these arrangements we walked to Contey, and called on several of the Protestant families, who appeared glad to see us, never having seen any Friends before. We also went to see an *Ecole Communale*, and left little Scripture books for each of the children, about twenty in all. In walking to the meeting we had the company of some others from Contey, in addition to B. W. The house, containing about 200, was quite full. W. F. was engaged in declaring the gospel message to the people, who were still and attentive; and to many, no doubt, it proved to be a season of good tidings of great joy. With the fine light of the moon we got back about half-past ten.

24th.—We went across the country about four miles to Harponville, to the meeting at ten. The house was not so large as the one we were at last evening, but it was pretty well filled; and dear W. F. was enabled to proclaim the Gospel message under the influence and with the authority of its Divine Author.

We had more than three miles to walk to Contey to a meeting at half-past ten. On our way we stopped at B. W.'s, whose wife had provided a dinner for us. The people were

assembled when we arrived at the meeting-house. After a short time of silence, W. F. was engaged in opening, and applying the truths of the Gospel to our every-day walk in life, warning all present to flee from the wrath to come, by doing works meet for repentance, and bearing the fruits of righteousness, the end whereof is everlasting life. The people, about 200, were quiet and attentive. Some of these kind people offered us beds at their houses, though we apprehended it would have been at inconvenience to themselves.

On leaving Amiens they proceeded by Arras and Douay to Calais, where they arrived on the 16th of the Twelfth Month, and held two meetings, one at Basseville in the morning, the other in the Wesleyan Meeting-house in the afternoon of First-day. Of that meeting E. R. writes:—

After a time of solemn silence, W. F. stood up with the language, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." He chiefly addressed an awakened, serious, seeking people, who have come out of the superstitions of the Romish Church, and some of them have united with the Wesleyans. The meeting was still and quiet, and the people very attentive. It did not appear that any Friends had held a meeting before at Calais.

17th.—Went by appointment to the house of a pious woman, to meet her and a friend of hers, whose husband is a Catholic, and opposed to her being Protestant. W. F. was enabled to administer to the spiritual wants of these two awakened and devoted women in the language of consolation and encouragement—a time that will be long had in remembrance by both the visited and the visitors.

They crossed the Channel that afternoon, and landed safely at Dover.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

HOME—FURTHER LABOURS IN FRANCE.

WILLIAM FORSTER appears to have returned to his home for a season, in much of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; and it is interesting to meet with the following notices respecting him from the private journal of his friend J. J. Gurney, who had himself come home about the same time from a journey in the north of England:—"Our beloved William Forster," he writes, on the 23rd of Twelfth Month, "soon came to us, in the evening, kind and bright as usual. It was much of a satisfaction to sit down again with our own friends. The meetings were large; that in the morning quiet, but not of the highest order. In the afternoon, dear W. F. spoke in his own heart-searching, yet comforting strain, on the case of those, who, after having heard and received the truth, endure for a little time and then fall away. Lively and affecting was his call to an awful, inward, holy fear of God, to watchfulness and prayer, to a daily practical obedience to the light of the Spirit of Christ. I was afterwards engaged in a short thanksgiving for his safe return."

A few days later he remarks:—"Our Quarterly Meeting has been truly a time of favour, much refreshment of soul and much solid peace being felt on the occasion. In the men's meeting dear William Forster, who is full of tender love towards us, encouraged the members of our very small meetings, and

gave a touching recital of the prevalence of Papal darkness on the one hand, and of the circulation of spiritual truth on the other, in France, where his lot has lately been cast." Again, J. J. G. writes, First Month 23, 1845:—"We had a quiet, solid meeting this morning. William Forster spoke on that work which we have all to perform in the Lord's vineyard, before the night closes upon us." Again, First Month 27:—"We have much cause for comfort, and even rejoicing, in the retrospect of yesterday. The meeting was to my feelings very solemn and edifying. Dear W. F. was largely engaged in the morning on the law of righteousness: it was a searching discourse—a moving, heart-stirring appeal.*

It was not long after this that the health of William Forster gave cause for much anxiety. He became so unwell that, under medical care, he was not only kept in doors, but much confined to bed. The increased illness of Sir T. F. Buxton, about the same time, and his decease soon after, on the 19th of Second Month, greatly added to the trial. Again, to quote J. J. Gurney's private journal, on this affecting occasion, Second Month 22nd:—"Our dear friend Josiah Forster arrived by coach, and we all went quietly to meeting together. It was, I thought, a refreshing, sustaining time of reverent waiting upon the Lord, and prayer; something of that retirement of soul which dearest Fowell himself used to call 'divine silence.' After an early dinner, my dearest E. and J. and Anna Forster—the only survivor of that dear, delightful family—went to Northrepps.

* These extracts from J. J. G.'s private unpublished journal have been kindly furnished by E. P. Gurney.

Our meeting was truly affecting; but the grief into the midst of which we came was natural, and we spent a comforting evening with them. In the course of a very precious family sitting, I was much engaged in thanksgiving and prayer, recounting the characteristic points in the life and experience of our beloved departed one. Dearest Hannah, very, very sweet—a *gracious* sufferer."

Such a record, of such a family scene, can scarcely fail to be interesting to all who read it. To William Forster, in his involuntary seclusion at home, from the state of his own health, this event was peculiarly touching on his own account, and much more so still in tender sympathy with his beloved wife. To her the death of such a brother left a void that could not be filled up; and deep was her affliction. But she was a Christian; and all her womanly and sisterly feelings were beautifully merged in humble acquiescence in her heavenly Father's will.

William Forster's health required great care throughout the winter and spring; but he went up to London to attend the Yearly Meeting of 1845. Objects of more than ordinary interest and importance, which will be referred to afterwards, claimed the attention of Friends during its sittings. In the course of these, William Forster was brought under much feeling for those who are tried with the temptations of prosperity, and

He expressed his desire that they may not yield to the spirit of the world, or assimilate with its customs, or those things which, in the tenderness of their conscience, they know to be inconsistent with the law of Christ. Great is the blessedness of a lowly and contented spirit to those who are engaged in trade. Those who feel that they are possessed of talents,

by using which they may be made possessors of large wealth, claim an interest in our prayers.

Those who are tempted with a spirit of speculation,—with a prospect of immediate and very large additions to their wealth, may intend to make a good use of it; yet, if they cannot enter into the speculation with a good conscience towards God, the desire of their heart may be granted, but He may send leanness into their souls. If in these things their riches should increase, and at the same time they have not the consciousness that they are laying up treasure in heaven, what will be their condition on the day that is fast approaching upon us all? Such is the Lord's condescending goodness, that He not only grants a sense of the checks of his Spirit,—that which says in the cool of the day, "Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further;" not only shows them what they may not do, and what they must do, but what they may do, and He guides them in the way they should take. "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." He provides that which He sees to be good for us, and for those who are most dear to us in life. What an encouragement to trust in Him!

When we can look over our temporal possessions, whether large or small, and believe that they are what God has provided for us, we can with thankfulness bless his holy name. We should press after a lowly, contented, submissive mind; but in the first place seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, serve Him with the whole of the little strength He is pleased to grant us during the residue of our days—and this residue to some may be very small—be concerned that we come entirely out of the bondage of the present world. O! that we may be quickened to a right understanding of ourselves, and of the dangers with which we are surrounded; for then we know not how much we may be blessed ourselves, nor in what degree we may be made a means of help and of shelter unto others.

Speaking of the inestimable value of unity and brotherly love, he encouraged Friends to cherish these graces. The more we are baptized into a sense of what we are, and of what we owe, the more prepared we are to bear one another's

burthens. If we feel after what would keep us in a low, watchful, dependent mind, we shall know more of a growth in the Truth, and deepen in the root; and this will show forth itself in love and in good works. The more we get to the root, the more we prosper in the Truth. Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good also; that which constitutes the substance of vital godliness will then become the object of our desires individually.

We who are advancing in life should feel the importance of filling up our place by a good example to the flock; and be more and more exercised to feel after that which will keep the mind disencumbered of the cares of this life. Let those who have provided an ample sufficiency return thanks for this, seeking to keep the mind in a quiet state, and not being occupied with the cares of life in old age.

In the early days of the church, the Lord was the strength and the comfort of his people. All our suffering is known to Him who supplies our need, and is looking down upon us with an eye of the tenderest pity.

After the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting, W. Forster returned home for a short time; but, though still in feeble health, he felt it to be a religious duty to renew his labour of love in the North of France, and, without delay, to finish his Christian work there.

Accompanied again by Edmund Richards, and by Edward Backhouse, jun., his kind and efficient helpers, he crossed over from Dover to Calais on the 21st of Sixth Month. They were detained a little at Dunkerque, and thence proceeded to Cambray. There William Forster writes on the 27th:—

I find a little to do from day to day, and much to suffer; perhaps enough of doing and suffering to confirm me in my inward sense of this being my present path of duty; but it is a day of small things for Friends in this land: this is especially

the case with me; and happily just now I am low enough to be content with the smallest. We went out yesterday to Wadencourt, where, and in the neighbourhood, there are said to be 600 Protestants. The pastor, Elie Larcheveque, and his family received us with true Christian hospitality. I think it was a good visit, and their hearts seemed open to receive what I had to communicate. We came upon them just when they were surrounded by their whole family. The congregation are many of them poor, mostly weavers of cambric. We are to go there this afternoon; an engagement most formidable in prospect. I am so discouraged about it, that I could soon bring myself to doubt whether the cause might not as well be served in giving up the appointment as in keeping it; but I believe we must go and do our best, and pray to be kept from harm.

The meeting in the afternoon consisted of about 230 individuals, and Edmund Richards says:—"Dear William Forster was enabled, from the springs of divine life, to preach the glad tidings of the gospel to an attentive audience." He himself remarks respecting it:—

It was a large gathering, and our deficiency was remarkably and unexpectedly supplied by the son of our good friend Larcheveque, who, with much feeling and with great accuracy, gave the people a *résumé* of that which I had endeavoured to communicate through my interpreter. He was followed by the dear old man, who spoke of our visit in stronger terms than I wished to hear. The people were very loving, and we parted from the family in much affection.

They next visited St. Quentin, and held a meeting there, which Edmund Richards describes as having been well attended, the people being very still and attentive, whilst W. F. was proclaiming the gospel message; concluding the meeting in supplication,

thanksgiving, and praise. In allusion to his various services in those parts, William Forster remarks:—

In some respects I think it has been one of the most interesting visits that I have made in France. We found much openness in all sorts of people.

From St. Quentin they proceeded to Rheims, Chalons, and Vitry de Français. At the latter place William Forster writes:—

Our visits at Rheims and Chalons were times of very deep and touching interest to me. I believe I carefully endeavoured to watch every opening for service, and think it a favour I had not long to anticipate the trial attendant upon some of these little acts of duty, particularly the visits to the Prefêt and to his wife at Chalons, and to a Protestant gentleman, "*très riche*," at Chalons, and the *elèves*, Protestants, in the *Ecole des Arts et Mètiers* at Chalons.

I think nobody can imagine the almost constant yearning of my mind after the young men in the schools, and colleges, and seminaries wherever we go. I should be very thankful could I be helped to write something intelligible for them. I could go through a great deal of fatigue and all sorts of trial —at least I think so—to get it delivered at the *Colléges Royales*.

At Rheims the *Proviseur* behaved very well; I could only wonder that he bore with patience my plainness, and my blundering in my endeavour to put before him some of my views and feelings. The Archbishop was very civil, and would not let us come away. On giving a tract entitled "The Inconsistency of all Wars and Fightings under the Gospel," and on my saying I did not believe the Archbishop to be an *homme de guerre*, he almost immediately quoted the Vulgate, Psalm lviii. 30,—"Scatter thou the people that delight in war." I was glad to find him so familiar with the Scriptures. My chamber was just opposite the grand entrance to the

cathedral. I had, a few hours before, seen him in procession with his golden crook, preceded by the priests of his diocese, dressed up in all the tawdry of their canonicals; such a display as I never saw before, and do not wish to see again. At this place we have found a few serious persons, to my comfort; particularly two young men, alive to good: both had been recently brought off from the Romish Church.

They reached Nancy, a city of about 38,000 inhabitants, on the 14th of Eighth Month; and, towards the close of a few days' tarriance there, William Forster gives the following account:—

I endeavoured diligently to make the best use of the time; and I hope it has not been all thrown away. Our way has opened to the *Colleye Royale;* the *Proviseur* and *Censeur* received us courteously, and a copy of the paper on slavery is given to each of the professors. I have made a very general visit to the houses of the principal Protestant families, to whom we have sent such a selection of our tracts as seemed suitable. I find a very ready response on the part of most people we meet with on the subject of slavery. We have had a large edition printed of the Yearly Meeting's paper on wars and fightings, and made a very free distribution of it. I watch for every opportunity to give the "Lock and Key," and the tract on prophecy. It is a great satisfaction to me to have them, particularly for the *instituteurs* of the public schools, both Catholic and Protestant. I still feel the want of something on the treatment of aborigines by Christian and civilized nations; and it would be an immense relief to me, could I have something setting forth my own views on the brotherhood of the great family of man.

Last evening we saw a large number recently brought off from the Roman Catholic profession, at their usual weekly *reunion*, mostly *ouvriers;* and if they are to be taken as a fair specimen of what we hear of in various parts of France, it is indeed a blessed work. Our two meetings, at Raches, about

noon, and at Joinville in the evening, cost me much; but the day ended in more peace than I could have hoped for. They were principally composed of Catholics; the greater part heard me with attention, and I had comfort in believing that some of them are opening their minds to the truth. That at Joinville was the most of a public meeting of any I have attended in France. My heart was brimful, far beyond all expression.

Having gone on to Metz, he writes the following evening from that place:—

I found I could not come away from Nancy without trying to see two or three people of the most influential of the Catholics; and I could not be sorry that I made the effort. I came away with an easy mind, and enjoyed the fine day and the cheerful scenery of our journey down the valley of the Moselle, certainly one of the finest valleys I have seen in France. The country abounds in vineyards; and it was much to my taste to see the villagers, men and women, at work pruning and tying up their vines. How I should like to have a vineyard! Nancy is a fine city, some parts of it really handsome, quite the pride of the north of France. Metz is a very different place—closely built, strongly fortified, swarming with soldiers, with fine promenades, and very beautiful views of the surrounding country. I hope to be watchful for such openings as may present themselves, and not to fret too much, if I find little or nothing to do.

On the 23rd he again writes from Metz:—

I did not see my way to attempt anything of a reunion with the Protestants of this place until this morning. I must confess that anything of a public meeting is not only an unutterable humiliation to me, but I cannot say how much, in my weakness and fear, it brings me into trembling for the safety of the ark, and for the honour of the cause of Christ.

I have visited most of the schools under the care of the

municipal authories, and endeavoured to say what I could to them in presenting the "Lock and Key." It is, I suppose, the most perfect system of literary instruction in any town in France; but there may be many such places elsewhere, though I do not know of them. Yet one feels that the main thing is wanting. Ample opportunity is given to the priest for religious instruction, but still it is not Christianity, the religion of the New Testament, that they are taught: that is the grievance—and it is a grievance most deeply to be felt and deplored. There are five *écoles prémieres* for boys, three for girls; four *salles d'asile*, an *école inférieure*; a fine establishment little short of a college; a school for Protestants; and an *école Israelite*. The normal school is spoken of in the highest terms.

I believe I am endeavouring carefully to feel my way from step to step, and to watch for every opportunity to throw in, out of our little store, that which may bring the people to some understanding of what we believe to be true Christianity. But still I feel that our doings are very small, scarcely worthy to be named, but as the drop of a bucket. Yet sometimes I hope that, though but a drop, it is a drop.

The following evening he adds:—

We have had our meeting in the Protestant meeting-house, a pretty large congregation, to whom I endeavoured to express that which was brought before me. They were very attentive, and I thought the stillness, both at the early part of the meeting and at the close, was remarkable.

I had been much cast down in the course of the day; going to the Jews' school was depressing to me; partly in apprehension that there might be a tendency to a sort of rationalized Christianity in those I was to visit in the evening. I thought it a favour that in the meeting—as it related to myself at least—the truth, that is the truth as it is in Jesus, was over all; and I was very bold in proclaiming it. O if I could but have spoken to them direct and *librement*—my heart was so full part of the time, what a relief it would have been!

Many small meetings with Protestants and Roman Catholics, besides those already mentioned, had been held during this engagement. The anti-slavery papers had been widely circulated, and a large distribution of tracts, on the Christian principles of Friends, had taken place, along with Scripture selections, and biographical memoirs, in the simple language of Scripture, of some of the prominent characters mentioned in the Sacred Volume. Besides the distribution from hand to hand, a large number of small parcels had been tied up, and forwarded both to young and old. After these laborious engagements, the little band of Christian fellow-servants proceeded, with but little delay, direct to Paris, and thence to Calais.

The delicate state of his beloved wife's health, his own bodily infirmities, and the prospect of another religious engagement in the service of the Church, had all pressed heavily upon William Forster during the last month's varied occupations and travels. He was strengthened, nevertheless, as has been seen, to labour abundantly in the cause of the Gospel of Christ wherever he came. Just before he embarked at Calais for England, on the 30th of Seventh Month, he wrote :—

I am glad to say that I feel myself quite at liberty to leave this country. During a few moments of quiet this morning, I thought I had a sense of it granted me in that which is not at our command.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SECOND VISIT TO AMERICA.

DEPUTATION TO INDIANA YEARLY MEETING.

ALLUSION has already been made, in the preceding chapter, to William Forster's attendance of the Yearly Meeting of 1845, during the interval between his two last visits in France. He had left his wife in a state of delicate health, and he himself was far from having regained his usual strength; yet he was enabled, in a remarkable manner, to give up his mind to unite with his friends in the serious consideration of the various questions which claimed their attention. The point of greatest interest was the case of Indiana Yearly Meeting. The Epistle from that meeting to Friends in this country referred to the separation of a number of their members from the body, on account of a diversity of sentiment which had arisen amongst them on the right course of proceeding in regard to anti-slavery efforts. As might be expected, William Forster took a deep interest in what had occurred; and his own remarks, in letters to his beloved wife, will best describe what passed in the meeting in connection with these painful events.

1845. *5th mo. 22nd.*—I was a little enlivened in the Committee on Epistles yesterday evening. Friends had before them, in what I thought was a very good feeling of brotherly love, the case of the separation of Friends in Indiana. A

committee was appointed to see whether anything can be done, by way of affectionate expostulation, to persuade them to give up their separate meetings, and come back to the meetings of Friends. I think it quite worth coming to London for, if nothing else be permitted me than to take part with Friends in their exercise of love. There seems to me such an evident hope that the presence of our Lord rests upon it.

The Yearly Meeting concluded to send a deputation to Indiana, and William Foster was one of the Friends set apart for that service. He adds :—

Our Yearly Meeting is now over; as we have travelled along in the concern for Friends of Indiana, I could have been glad to have had thee with us. First, our committee, then the large committee of the Yearly Meeting, and afterwards the Yearly Meeting itself. Such depth of feeling, solemnity, and unity, as I think I never before witnessed.

It was referred to the committee to bring forward such names as they believed right. I said as much about myself as I think thou couldst have desired: there was much tenderness manifested towards me; but, as it seemed that friends were ready to take the responsibility upon themselves, I gave way, and had peace and support in my submissiveness. My brother Josiah, George Stacey, and John Allen, allowed their names to go forward.* Many spoke in hearty concurrence, and there was a solemn feeling over the minds of friends. I ventured to draw the attention of the meeting to my state of health: Friends were very tender. It has brought both myself, and the friends most concerned, into very deep feeling after the counsel of the Lord, and put us upon the exercise of our faith. I never before knew, to the same extent, what it was to be called to the hazard of my life on such service. But still the concern seemed to live

* The name of Joseph Bewley, of Dublin, was added conditionally; but when the time of departure arrived he did not feel at liberty to leave home.

through it all; and to grow more and more weighty as difficulties increased.

United as they were by the most endearing bond, for the Gospel's sake, and for the good of the church, William and Anna Forster were made willing that the waves of the Atlantic should a second time roll between them.

William Forster had but a short time to prepare for the voyage to America after returning from France. The deputation, consisting of the four Friends named above, embarked at Liverpool for New York, on the 23rd of the Eighth Month. They were the bearers of the following Epistle from the Yearly Meeting, which clearly sets forth the object of their embassy of love :—

TO THOSE WHO HAVE RECENTLY WITHDRAWN FROM INDIANA YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS.

DEAR FRIENDS,—This meeting has, from time to time, been introduced into a feeling of much brotherly concern and interest on your behalf, in consequence of your having withdrawn from the body of Friends in Indiana Yearly Meeting; and those feelings are attended with an earnest and affectionate solicitude for your re-union with them.

We have a strong sense of the preciousness and the safety of true gospel unity. We are enjoined to submit ourselves one to another in the fear of God; to be subject one to another, and to be clothed with humility. This subjection one to another in love greatly promotes that individual growth in grace which all the faithful followers of Christ cannot but desire may be their blessed experience.

The considerations which have led us to address you are confirmed by reflecting on the comfort and strength which have arisen from that Christian fellowship and harmony which have prevailed in our religious Society to so large an extent,

from its rise to the present period; which we can only ascribe to the power of the Holy Spirit, so conspicuously manifested in its first gathering; and every interruption to which blessings must be regarded as a very serious evil.

We cannot adequately set forth the sense we have of the extent to which, where the precious bond of religious fellowship is seen to be in danger, we are individually called upon to refrain from insisting on our own judgment, rather than do anything that could contribute to its dissolution. The living members of the body will watch carefully against such a tendency, seeking to be endued with all long-suffering, meekness, and love.

Trusting that, on the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and on the spirituality of divine worship, there exists no essential difference between you and the body from which you have withdrawn, we have felt much concern and sorrow on hearing that you have discontinued assembling with them to present yourselves together before the Lord. Accept, we beseech you, our earnest and affectionate entreaty, that you will relinquish your separate meetings for this purpose, will wholly discontinue them, and again assemble for the public worship of Almighty God with those with whom you have been accustomed thus to meet.

In extending this invitation, we are not insensible to those humiliations by which the accepting it may be accompanied. We feel tenderly for you in thinking of your present circumstances. But, whatever may be the sacrifices which attend such a course of conduct as that which we thus venture to recommend, we believe that, were it taken in the reverent fear and love of God, with a single eye to his honour, and to the service of our Lord and Redeemer, it would bring that peace to the soul which passeth understanding; that the blessing of the Most High would rest upon it, both as it affects you and your beloved offspring; and that in your latter days, a retrospect on this course would bring a comfort to the soul which would amply compensate for all that you may have to do or endure in connection therewith.

With sincere desires that the wisdom which is from above,

which is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, may be granted to every one of you on the perusal and calm consideration of this our affectionate address, we are your friends:

Signed in and on behalf of the Meeting, by

GEORGE STACEY,
Clerk of the Meeting this year.

Just before leaving the port of Liverpool, William Forster writes to his wife on board the *Great Western*:—

I am quiet in mind, and gently stayed; in which I feel reverent thankfulness to our God and Saviour, and trust I may, without presumption, commend myself and thee and him (his dear son) into the hands of our tender and merciful Father in heaven.

I awoke this morning, with the language upon my mind, and all but upon my lips—"Lord! into thy hands I commit my spirit;" and almost immediately it was suggested, in that which I thought was not of myself, "and my body." It gave me a little confidence that that which pertains to the latter is not beneath his notice; and in this I found comfort and hope, which has not yet forsaken me.

They landed at New York on the 9th of the Ninth Month, after a voyage of seventeen days. William Forster says respecting the passage:—

It has been in many respects a very trying voyage, mostly head-wind and stormy, at one time fearfully so. I was much confined to my berth; and many of the days in which I did sit up, it was as much as I could do to keep my seat on the main deck. The surgeon was attentive and skilful. I put myself under his care soon after I went on board.

The allusion here made was to a local ailment which had for some months occasioned him much

care, and awakened the solicitude of his friends. He felt the effects of it, as they went along, in the jolting carriages on many of the rough roads in the West; but he was helped through in safety, and "enabled to attend to all their appointments, and during the whole journey did not miss a single meeting."

The deputation met a cordial welcome from Friends of New York, Burlington, Philadelphia and its neighbourhood, and in Baltimore; and proceeded with as little delay as practicable to Richmond in Indiana, where they arrived on the 29th of the Ninth Month. After the close of the Yearly Meeting there, William Forster remarks:—

Friends in Indiana have manifested much love and openheartedness towards me, and seem willing to remember me and my former visit. Notwithstanding all their love and kindness, I have not thought that I had much to do in their public meetings for worship; but I did take part in the other meetings, in which I trust I did not set myself to work.

It is now become a very serious and important consideration, what course we should pursue in furtherance of the object which has brought us here. After very earnest desire to find our path, we are all come to the mind that we can do no less than make a beginning to see these dear *soi-disant* anti-slavery friends in their own respective neighbourhoods.

After more than two weeks' diligent travel westward, they reached Salem, in the State of Iowa, on the 26th of the Tenth Month. Thence William Forster writes on the following day to his wife:—

Here we are, twenty miles west of the Mississippi, 1140 from New York, and, as far as I know, we have now arrived

at the most remote point of our travels. We reached the river about an hour before sunset on Seventh-day evening. The ferry-boat was on this side, and it was long before they came for us; however we had daylight to enjoy the scenery, which was soft and very fine; the western banks steep. The average width of the river is about a mile; and, as we went some distance down the river, it took us about half an hour to cross it. We found capital quarters at the Madison Hotel; a striking contrast to our previous night's lodging;—nine of us in a moderately large cabin—two travellers and the nephew of our landlady in a bed in one corner of the house—five of us on the floor—the sixth sitting by the fire all night. The next morning we managed to get to the meeting at New Garden, twelve or fourteen miles distant, before Friends were all assembled. A log house in the open prairie—neither tree nor fence within a considerable distance—pretty well filled with new settlers and their children: such a lot of babies as I had never before seen in so small a meeting. Friends were hospitable and affectionate. We passed about a week in that country, and then proceeded to see two small companies of those who had seceded, in the northern parts of Indiana, and one within the southern limits of Michigan.

They diligently pursued their work of restoring love; and on the 22nd of First Month, 1846, William Forster again writes from Munceytown, in Indiana:—

We have been at several meetings, in which I was much enlarged in that love which is not at our command, and the way seemed to be opened to me, from place to place, to speak of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, to my own relief and comfort. Friends have been hospitable and affectionate to me, and sometimes I have enjoyed a good feeling of the best fellowship with some to whom I was formerly known, and with many others who were previously strangers to me. I am thankful to say that generally I am kept in a quiet, loving, tender mind; and, from one family to another, and one meeting to another, when these people are collected to

meet us in their own meeting-houses or elsewhere, I am, much to my own admiration, favoured with a little fresh feeling of that love in which I believe the concern originated at our late Yearly Meeting; and in that I am strengthened to endure in the hope that ultimately it may prevail.

The next letter which comes under notice is

To his Son.

Washington, *Third Month 27th, 1846.*

My dearest William,—We arrived at Baltimore on Seventh-day evening. I was much comforted by the warm and friendly hospitality of Dr. Thomas and his family, and the kindness of many other friends. We have been so long out of the way of our own people, it was much of a refreshment to me to get among them again. On Fourth-day morning we paid a visit to the President (Polk); he received us with much politeness, and allowed us ample opportunity to speak to him upon subjects pressing upon our minds.

Our other engagements have been principally in conversational visits upon slavery to senators from the Southern States. It was a little service to which my mind had been drawn for several weeks; and I cannot but feel very thankful that the way has thus far opened for us. This morning we had a long and very friendly conversation with a cotton-planter from Alabama. After that a very interesting visit to the Brazilian Minister: the Spanish Minister we found was not in town. We then had an interview with the Secretary of the Navy, and conversed with him on the capture they have lately made, on the coast of Africa, of a large cargo of young negro slaves. He was very open and frank, and confessed, without the idea being suggested to him on our part, that there was no hope of the extermination of this wicked trade but by the extinction of slavery. There had been a very large mortality on board the ship; the survivors were taken to Liberia, and are, it is said, to be provided for at the expense of the American Government.

It is almost universally, in effect, the cry in this country,

in the language uttered by the senator from Florida whom we visited last evening, *Laissez nous faire.* In coming here we seem to have been brought under the weight of a dark and heavy cloud; and most depressing it is to my mind and spirits. But I have the belief that we have not wandered out of the way of our path of duty. It may be well for us to be brought to an understanding of the evils of the case, and to be made to feel all the difficulties with which it is encompassed. There is much to be done and much to be felt before the end is accomplished; and it may yet be long delayed. My principal desire is, that men of a sound mind and a right spirit may be raised up to carry on the work that has been begun; and that they all may be faithful and devoted to the work of their day. I have been much struck with their very general testimony to the increasing intelligence, the docility and good conduct, of the negro, and that in these respects the rising generation are in advance of their fathers. So that we may hope they are not standing still, but in the way to become more fully prepared for the change, whenever they shall have the happiness to enjoy it.

Having accomplished the service for which they were appointed, the deputation embarked at Boston, on the 1st of the Fifth Month, and landed at Liverpool on the 14th in safety and in health. The Yearly Meeting occurred in London soon after their arrival in England, when they handed in the following report, which, as a supplement to the fragmentary details derived from William Forster's letters, will doubtless be acceptable to the general reader:—

Report of the Friends appointed to attend the last Yearly Meeting in Indiana, to whom was entrusted the communication of the Epistle addressed to those who had recently withdrawn from Friends in the compass of that Yearly Meeting.

We took a very early opportunity of conferring together after the close of the last Yearly Meeting, when we were

unitedly of the judgment that it would be well, in accordance with the object of our appointment, to endeavour to arrange our proceedings so as to arrive at Richmond on the eve of Indiana Yearly Meeting to be held there.

We accordingly embarked at Liverpool on the 23rd of the Eighth Month, and landed at New York on the 9th of the Ninth Month. We met with a kind, open reception from Friends of that city; and also from those at Burlington, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, as we passed along; and were favoured to arrive in health and in safety at Richmond on the 29th of the Ninth Month, thankful for the preservation which had been granted to us by the Lord, both by sea and land.

We attended the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders which was held the following day, and afterwards the Yearly Meeting as it met in course, and presented to both meetings the minute of our appointment; and we were received on both occasions with cordiality and confidence. As we were strangers to the local situations of those who had separated from Friends, and to whom the Epistle entrusted to us was addressed, we applied to the Yearly Meeting for a small committee to give us the needful information, as to the distances, the relative localities, and needful preparations for travelling. The request was at once complied with; a committee was appointed for this simple object, and we were much assisted in the matters in which the help was required.

On deliberating on the course which we should take, there being obvious reasons why we should proceed in the first place to the remotest settlements, we lost no time in setting out for *Iowa*. In that territory several meetings of Friends are now settled, and there is one meeting of those to whom the Epistle is addressed. We passed about a week in that country, and then proceeded to see two small companies of those who had seceded in the northern parts of Indiana, and one within the southern limits of Michigan. We returned into Indiana, where, with the exception of those settlements already referred to, and four in the western parts of Ohio, the greater proportion of those who are withdrawn now reside.

After spending about two months in Indiana, we proceeded

to Ohio, and concluded our labours in that State on the 20th of the Second Month, having, as we believe, visited all the companies of this description, thirty-three in number, with the exception of one that was remotely situated, and to which access at the time of being in the neighbourhood was almost impracticable. In the course of our travels, we attended several of the Monthly Meetings for Discipline, to which service we received the encouragement of Indiana Yearly Meeting, and in which we uniformly met with much openness.

Two of our number were, from the state of their health, one after the other prevented taking their share in some parts of the work; whilst the other two were enabled to attend to the whole of the service. And here we may remark that our dear friend Joseph Bewley, as the time for our leaving England drew near, availing himself of the liberty left to him by the Yearly Meeting, did not see that the way opened for his joining in the visit.

The course which we thought it right to pursue in carrying out the concern of the Yearly Meeting was to invite, in each district, those who have separated to come together; and after a time of silence to read the minute of our appointment, and then the Epistle of counsel, offering such observations as presented at the time connected with the business referred to us; and giving such explanation as seemed called for by any remarks that were made by those who were thus convened. Copies of the Epistle were distributed to the heads of families to whom it was addressed.

In a few instances it seemed best to visit those who were separated at their own dwellings, and there very generally to read the minute and the Epistle. This arrangement was readily complied with, when proposed. And on all occasions a willingness to meet us was manifested, even when the invitation was unavoidably extended on a short notice.

It was our endeavour, in fulfilling our appointment, to act in strict conformity with the concern of the Yearly Meeting; and as we were visiting those who we found were still making profession of the principles of our religious Society, we were brought from one place to another to see the wisdom of the

simple course adopted by the Yearly Meeting, in entreating those who have set up separate distinct meetings for worship to relinquish them; and to return to meet with those from whom they had withdrawn. Repeated experience has indeed confirmed us in the persuasion that there was no other course which the Yearly Meeting could with propriety have pursued.

We have thankfully to acknowledge that from place to place, until the close of the engagement, we have been mercifully granted a renewed sense of that Christian love and interest for those whom we met, in which the concern of the Yearly Meeting had its origin; and in which love we were enabled, in sympathy with them under their existing circumstances, to labour for their reunion with those from whom they were separated. We offer no remarks on the results of this work of faith and labour of love, committing all to the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom alone it rests to carry out the exercises of the church for the promotion of his own cause.

In passing along we felt much for the children of those who had withdrawn; and there are many large young families of that description. We fear that, being thus deprived of the notice of the body of Friends, and of the salutary care which our Christian discipline provides, they may sustain serious disadvantage and loss.

The painful experience which we have passed through, in attending to this service, has again and again brought us to feel the evil effects of division; and increasingly to value that unity and fellowship which have so largely prevailed in our religious Society. Strong are our desires that we may all be alive to everything that is calculated to interrupt the harmony of the body, and that we may be enabled to perceive those subtle insinuations by the enemy of the peace of the church of Christ, which, as they are given way to, gradually undermine its foundation; and thus prevent its spreading and its usefulness in the earth.

At the Yearly Meeting of Indiana in 1842, a committee was appointed to visit the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings. This appointment had immediate reference to that state of

things which was so early followed by separation and by the setting up of distinct meetings for worship and discipline. The committee not being discharged, we thought it well to propose a conference with them, after we had concluded the business referred to us. Such of the men Friends of the committee as could conveniently come together accepted the invitation, and met us at Waynesville, in Ohio, on the 20th of the Second Month. We thus had an opportunity which was satisfactory to us, to advert to a few subjects, which had come before us in the course of our travels, arising out of the separation, and connected with the right exercise and maintenance of our Christian care and discipline.

We think of many dear friends of Indiana Yearly Meeting, as of brethren and sisters who are endeavouring to be humble, faithful followers of the Lord Jesus.* It is our desire for them, and for all the members of that large and important body—a desire which we express in humility—that they may individually grow in the truth, and that the Lord's cause may prosper in their hands.

After considerable thoughtfulness we concluded to attend the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, and trust that in doing

* William Forster had visited those parts more than twenty years before, under very different circumstances (see vol. i., pp. 364-66); and to him, especially, the attendance of Indiana Yearly Meeting, on this occasion, had been a matter of deep interest. The following notice is from the memoranda of his brother, Josiah Forster, viz. :—

"*Indiana Yearly Meeting, 1845, 10th mo. 3rd.*—This sitting of the Yearly Meeting was large. My dear brother had an impressive address, saying that 'He had often, within the last few days, looked back at the circumstances of Friends twenty years ago, compared with what he found now. They were then settling in a wilderness country; now they had been blessed in their industry—had had plentiful harvests—and had now their herds and flocks. He appealed to the young people who were inheriting the fruits of the hard-working toils of their fathers and grandfathers—called upon them to guard against the snares and temptations of life—to bear in mind that the members of the Church of Christ ever had to live, and must continue to live, separate from the world, its maxims and habits, its spirit and friendship;—encouraging them to a diligent attendance of their meetings for worship and discipline, particularly their week-day meetings—inviting them, in godly magnanimity, to show themselves concerned to be followers of Christ."

so we were in the way of our duty. In the close of our service we had peace of mind, and we were satisfied that the time was come for our leaving America. We proceeded, the day after Philadelphia Yearly Meeting ended, for Boston; and embarked on the 1st of the present month, and after a favourable voyage were permitted to land at Liverpool on the 14th in safety and in health.

In conclusion, we are engaged in reverent thankfulness to acknowledge the constant and tender care of our Heavenly Father; and his mercies which were so often renewed toward us.

JOSIAH FORSTER.
WILLIAM FORSTER.
GEORGE STACEY.
JOHN ALLEN.

London, 5 mo. 25, 1846.

Thus were brought to a conclusion the labours of a committee in which William Forster took a conspicuous and an important part. As a contribution to the history of our little church these records are not without peculiar interest. And it may be truly said that few offices of love have ever been undertaken by one portion of a Christian community on behalf of another, which have been more signally attended with the divine blessing,* or which furnish a more beautiful illustration of the right mode of bearing one another's burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ.

Perhaps the following may not inappropriately close this chapter in the life of the subject of this memoir:—

* Most of those who seceded from the Society on this occasion were, at no distant period, restored to unity with their brethren, and not one of their separate meetings is now left.

Recollections of WILLIAM FORSTER'S *address in the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia, on Third-day morning, Fourth Month 20th, 1846.*

He had been thinking of what constituted the religion of the early Christians; and it seemed right for him, in a few words, to make mention of some of the wonderful dealings of the Most High, in bringing them from the power of darkness into his marvellous light. By listening to that voice which came from heaven through Jesus Christ, their souls were quickened to a lively faith in Him who had shed his precious blood for them, and died for their redemption. They became convinced that they were not their own, but were bought with a price, and consequently belonged to another. Ceasing to live unto themselves, and given up to live unto Him, their eyes were more and more opened to the light which shined in their hearts, giving them a knowledge of the glory of God; and believing in it as a heavenly unction, they knew the day of the Lord to break upon their souls, and felt bound to confess it. There was no more any need for every man to say to his brother, and every man to his neighbour, "Know the Lord," for, from the least of them to the greatest of them, his law was written upon their hearts, and they all were taught to love God. They could comprehend the command given to our fathers: "Thou shalt not go with the multitude to do evil." There was a period when they were a part of that multitude, but their ears had been opened to the words spoken from on high: "Come out of Babylon, my people,"— and they came out from the multitude in which they had done evil, trusting in God, who helped them by his power. And He made them a separate people, as a city set upon a hill, whose light could not be hid. This light did shine forth among all people, and as they lived in it themselves, and walked in it, they had fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleansed them from all sin. Yet what a poor despised people they were, though so owned by God! They did indeed feel Him to be with them in their midst, comforting their souls, and giving them an assurance of a blessed and glorious immortality. The more they were

afflicted, the more did they abound in consolation. The Saviour of men was with them, and by his arm of power brought them out of much tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and gave them a place among that multitude who stand on the holy mountain, ascribing all glory, honour, and praise to God for evermore.

But there came a long and dark night of apostacy, which overspread the nations; and in a great degree the power and glory of Christ seemed withdrawn from his Church. Yet God was mindful of his own cause, and forsook not his people, but graciously condescended to their weaknesses from one generation to another. And oh, how marvellously and how mightily did He work in leading his Church out of the darkness of apostacy; and what a blessed shining of the light of truth was that which He was pleased to show to our forefathers! It was nothing but the dawning of a brighter day; and how quickly did that day break forth upon them, in its meridian splendour and fulness of glory! Their eyes were opened to the light, and they were given to see in that wherein the multitude were wrong. They saw on what the Lord had placed the sentence of condemnation, and what it was that had a tendency to alienate from the life and power of godliness. Many things which the world esteemed good, and which the Church (so called) pronounced not evil, they saw to be an abomination in the sight of God. They knew to what degree it would bring upon them the hatred of the world; yet, consulting not with flesh and blood, but following as the truth led them, they were constrained to testify against the evils of the world, and the wickedness in high places. And, oh, what did it not cost them!—the loss of property, many cruel imprisonments and painful tortures, and often the loss of life itself. . . . .

It was acting upon this principle, ceasing to go with the multitude, and endeavouring to walk according to the knowledge which God was pleased to grant them, abiding in the light, and in the fear of Him, that they came to have a sight of, and were enabled to maintain in their primitive purity, the doctrines and principles of true religion, and to uphold to

the world those Christian testimonies which have distinguished our religious Society from the commencement.

Oh, how earnestly do I desire, my beloved brethren, that our eyes may be opened to that divine light, and we be permitted to see more and more of the glory of these latter days, and know more of the spirituality of the Christian religion—that we may know a putting away of the old man and his deeds, and that we may put on the new man, that old things may be done away and all things become new; and that, under the direction of the Most High, we may mind our high and holy calling, to come out of the world, and be no longer conformed to it, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. . . . .

I feel very tenderly for some who are sorely tried, and struggling on with an honest heart; who are endeavouring to bear the yoke of Christ, and patiently striving to enter in at the strait gate. I must ask some to look back to the day of their early visitations, to call to mind the tender dealings of the Lord towards them, when He made bare his holy arm, stretched out from the beginning, and plucked them as brands from the burning. These can indeed remember what has been the faithfulness of the Lord unto this hour; how often they had access to the throne of grace, to implore forgiveness for their backsliding, and, in moments of distress, to seek for consolation when none seemed near to sympathize. I believe there are many here who have taken some steps in the narrow way, in the highway to holiness—who have been called to set up stones of memorial in remembrance of God's tender mercies. Their souls have been quickened to a godly exercise, and waiting on the Lord; their strivings have not been in vain. Under his cherishing influence, may it please God to lengthen their days, that they may receive a blessing here, and experience more and more of his sweetness and love in the evening of life, and, through the grace and virtue of their Lord and Saviour, have their names enrolled in the Book of Life, and be permitted to enter within the gates of that glorious and eternal city, which "needeth not the light of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

VISITS IN SCOTLAND AND THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.—
THE FAMINE IN IRELAND.

PEACEFULLY returned from his second visit to America, William Forster resumed his home duties and enjoyments only for a short time. During this interval, his ministry, it is interesting to find from contemporary testimony, was of a very impressive character. On one occasion J. J. Gurney* remarks respecting it:—"Seventh Month 6th. Yesterday some precious spiritual privileges were graciously bestowed. In the morning meeting dear William Forster was largely and excellently engaged in ministry. 'Who made thee to differ from another?—and what hast thou that thou hast not received?' He dwelt on our accountability for the light bestowed upon us of the Christian revelation, as compared with the condition of the heathen, and uttered many awakening and even alarming words, calling our attention to that swiftly coming, and most awful period when it will be said to the filthy, 'Let him be filthy still,' and to the holy, 'Let him be holy still.'"

At the Monthly Meeting, the following Fifth-day, he was liberated to attend the ensuing General Meeting at Aberdeen, and for other religious service in Scotland and the North of England. In the

* Unpublished memoranda.

course of this engagement he was occupied both in holding meetings, and in visiting Friends in their families. Soon after his return home in the Ninth Month, his feelings were deeply affected, and his attention was very much absorbed, by the alarming accounts of an impending famine in Ireland.

Though up to Midsummer, 1846, the potato crop looked remarkably well, and there appeared every prospect of an abundant harvest, in one week nearly the whole crop was destroyed. Nor was the failure of the potato the only loss. The wheat was barely an average yield, and the barley and oats were deficient. The money value of the loss in potatoes and oats was computed to amount to sixteen millions sterling. The accounts which came in from all parts of the country left no room to doubt that the awful calamity of a general famine was impending. A deep sympathy was aroused, and great anxiety prevailed to do something to relieve the rapidly increasing distress. Large subscriptions were raised throughout the British Empire, and most liberal supplies of both food and money were nobly contributed from the United States of America.

At this juncture William Forster believed it to be his duty to undertake a journey through the most suffering districts, with the view of obtaining accurate information respecting the nature and amount of destitution, and of devising the best means of affording relief. The distressed condition of Ireland had attracted his attention before he heard of the formation in that country of the "Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends in Ireland;" and he conferred with his friends in London on the subject,

who fully united in his views, and encouraged him to prosecute the proposed journey. He set out on the 30th of Eleventh Month, 1846—and was accompanied in different parts of his route, by Friends from England and of Ireland, with whom he visited the counties of Roscommon, Leitrim, Fermanagh, Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Galway, Longford and Cavan. Most of these counties were closely inspected, and especial attention was paid to the wild and desolate parts of each. It was not until the 14th of Fourth Month, 1847, that he completed this engagement, which had been prolonged greatly beyond the expectations at first entertained by himself and his friends, and which he prosecuted in the depth of a very inclement winter, deprived of many of the comforts to which he was accustomed, and his feelings often painfully excited by witnessing misery beyond his power to relieve.

Acting in concert with the "Central Relief Committee" in Dublin, his examination disclosed a state of destitution far exceeding that which had been at first supposed. The usefulness of his visit in many respects soon became apparent. He stimulated the upper classes in the endeavour to relieve the distress around them. He encouraged those with whom he had intercourse, by the information he was able to give respecting the exertions made in other parts of the country, and by showing them that he himself sympathized with the difficulties of their position, and with the sufferings of the poor. He also afforded most important help to the Central Committee, by opening a correspondence with individuals and local bodies in those remote districts; and thus

furnished them with many efficient and trustworthy agents for the distribution of the funds confided to them, in places far removed from the residence of any member of their own religious community.

Before leaving Dublin for the West, William Forster had been requested to undertake the immediate distribution of relief, by advances of money in all cases in the course of his journey, in which there appeared to him a propriety in doing so. This discretion he from time to time exercised; nor did he fail, as a minister of Christ, to watch for opportunities to urge the powerful motives of the gospel to benevolent exertion, and to draw the attention of the poor sufferers to its strong consolations. *

The following characteristic extracts from his correspondence during this mission of Christian charity will not be found without interest, and may perhaps assist the reader in forming a more complete idea of what manner of man he was, and by what spirit he was actuated.

As early as in the Seventh Month, before setting out on his northern journey, William Forster wrote to his brother Josiah Forster, suggesting a deputation of Friends from this country to unite with Friends in Dublin, in looking into the prevailing distress,—adding:—

If I am thought suitable for the purpose, I am willing to be sent. My object would be to go to Galway, Castlebar, Sligo, County of Donegal, and other parts, and endeavour to ascertain the state of the smaller towns, such as Roscommon,

* See "Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, during the famine in Ireland in 1846 and 1847:" Dublin, 1852. That Committee had nearly £200,000 entrusted to their care and administration. More than half this sum came from America.

Tuam, &c., and the country districts lying in the way and out of the way, as might seem best, right and left.

Again he writes :—

I desire to be kept from a presumptuous spirit; at the same time I have a quiet hope that if I go I shall be carried through, but of that I do not wish to make myself too sure.

Alluding to the prospect of undertaking the journey, he says, nearer the time for leaving home for Ireland :—

Having endeavoured to act upon a simple desire to be found in the way of my duty, and the discharge of a debt of love to those who are in want and under suffering, I must try to hope that, if I go in a right mind, I shall be carried quietly through all I may have to meet with.

In the course of his Irish journey, he writes to his wife :—

First-day afternoon. Dublin.—William * soon found me out at the railway hotel, Liverpool, and I was glad to have him with me. George Crosfield called upon me with a proposal from his son Joseph to bear me company. When I found that he knew where and into what I was going, I readily and gratefully fell in with his offer. He seems, by his reading and the information he has obtained, to have been in training for the service. We had all reckoned upon a moderate passage across the Channel, but had not been long

* His son, William Edward Forster, Joseph Crosfield, of Liverpool, and James Huck Tuke, then of York, successively accompanied William Forster during his arduous labours in Ireland, besides some others of his kind friends from England and of that island. The three former each published reports of their journey, which will be found in the Appendix of the "Transactions of the Central Relief Committee."

out of the harbour before we found a strong north-west wind and a very rough sea: it was the ninth time I had crossed, and decidedly the most boisterous passage of them all. Joseph Bewley had met me at Liverpool, with a very hospitable invitation to his house, and to go there immediately on landing. We were invited to a sub-committee of Friends' Central Relief Association. It afforded me an opportunity of becoming more than ever informed of the extent and the nature of the calamity with which so large a portion of this fine country is visited, and of entering into some of the difficulties that Friends will have to contend with in administering relief.

12th mo. 4th. Boyle.—I have been very unwell with heavy cold, bad cough, and much oppression on my breathing.—Our time has been fully occupied by day—we have travelled late in the evening. But in the midst of all—sick at heart, I have never once, from the time I drove from our own door, had the least doubt but I was in the way of my duty, and never once felt the least grudge of any little strength I had to devote to this poor afflicted people. I keep my mind steadily to the object which brought me here, and am thankful to say that, from one place to another, and in one way or another, though it may have been but on a small scale, something has been effected.

We started an association at Castlereagh to-day, after calling upon the O'Connor Don, and visiting the union-house —such a mass of misery!—now happily provided for as far as it goes, and an interview with the proprietor of the town, T. G. Wiles, lately come into the possession of the Mount Sandford Estate. We met there just before the business of their Presentment Sessions, and, as we found the gentlemen all of one mind, something was soon accomplished. I offered a boiler to a clergyman in a very populous country district not far distant; but, as he had some expectation of receiving one from the Sackville Association, I hold myself engaged to send him £10 as soon as I can hear that they have commenced operations.

We then went to Charles Strickland's at Lough Glyn, agent

to the large estate of Lord Dillon. It was to a lady of that family the Bishop of Norwich had given me a letter of introduction. She was not at home, but her sister entered most warmly into our object. She is going to set their girls and women to work in knitting Guernsey frocks. I shall send her a little capital for the purchase of a good supply of yarn and needles. The ladies' committee at Moate took it up very heartily; and I hope it will supply some good substantial articles of clothing for the labouring men before the winter is over. They sadly want employment for the women and girls all through the country.

Yesterday, on our way from Athlone to Roscommon, we called at Lord Crofton's residence, near the little village of Ballimurry (the only place in Connaught in which there is a meeting of Friends). He was not at home; but when we heard he was gone on a visit to Lord Lorton in the neighbourhood of this place, it soon determined me on deviating from the course I had thought of, and to come round by Castlereagh and Boyle to Carrick.

It is our intention to go to Rockingham to-morrow, and, if we can effect it, to get an interview with Lord Crofton before he sets off, and to see Lord Lorton too. It is not the path I should choose for myself, and one from which I have a great natural shrinking; but I must try and do my best, and not allow myself to be turned away from what I believe to be the duty of the day.

On the 8th of Twelfth Month, from the county of Donegal:—

We had many visitors who came to us with their tale of woe. The Catholic curate made his statement with much feeling, and as I thought without any attempt at exaggeration. The surgeon of the poor-law union told of the progress of disease; and private gentlemen came full of apprehension that, bad as things are at present, they must yet be worse. What we saw and heard of that town and neighbourhood—Carrick-upon-Shannon—was most harrowing. We did a

little in the way of suggesting plans of relief, and I hope something will be effected. On Seventh-day evening we were admitted to the board of guardians; and, with the applicants for admission who had come from several miles round the country, and brought their children, begging to be taken into the union house, we saw such a mass of wretchedness as cannot be described. It was late in the evening; some of them had been waiting all the day without food, and had nothing to go home to but utter famine, or to eke out their wretched existence upon cabbages and turnips. We sent for a large supply of bread.

I thought much the next day of our Lord's compassion on the multitude, who had hungered long; and I cannot but hope—and that hope as it now revives gives me fresh comfort—that He will yet put it into the hearts of many who love Him, and desire to know his will that they may do it, to make effort for the famishing multitudes of the poor of this country.

12th mo. 9th. Stranorlan, county of Donegal.—I hope and trust that, in the kindness of our heavenly Father's love, we may be helped to do something in the cause of searching out distress, and making it known. I could regret that I have no more strength to give to the work; but I must try to be thankful for what I have, and carefully husband the latter.

11th. Letterkenny.—We have had a winterly night, snow and stormy; we do not yet know the state of the roads northward. It was quite a refreshment to me to make the acquaintance of J. V. Stewart, living in a beautiful place; so thoroughly open-hearted, and laboriously devoting himself to the care of the poor. There is every appearance about the place of a high standard of refinement and good domestic order. It has been very striking to me, within the last few days, to observe that in several places, persons, though not over-abounding in either public or private means, are so much impressed with the belief that our help would be more needed in places farther north, and upon the sea wall, that they decline accepting anything from us at present.

12th. Rathmilton.—We came from Letterkenny yesterday; a most winterly day, over a very exposed country. We had such a snow-storm that it made me think of the Kankakee,* and some of my coldest travelling in France. I never before had so much the idea of what it would be to perish in the cold. My companions went into the country to a remote and very distressed district, and I hope a channel of communication will be opened for their relief.

Evening. Dunfagashe.—Our landlord at Rathmilton is a baker, and, as he was willing to lend us a sack, I brought away a good lot of bread. One of my visits to a wretched way-side cabin was most touching; the poor man of the house told me that last night his wife was saying, "What shall we do this weather?" He said, "I told her to trust in the Almighty, and He would send relief;" and, with eyes filling to the brim, "Now," said he, "you see it is come." At our last baiting-place I got two of the constabulary—a fine, well-ordered set of young men—to go and show me the most distressed families in the place; they seemed quite to enjoy the job, and the poor creatures were glad enough to get what would go far towards satisfying their hunger for the remainder of the day. They spoke in strong terms of the good order of the peasantry in this county; and they are, I believe, enduring their misery with great patience. If this weather continues, it is hard to say what will become of the thousands employed on the roads at task-work; for they are not in a condition, from their broken-down state of health, from the want of food, and from the tattered condition of their clothing, to stand the cold. And it should be remembered that, from their usual habits of life, many of them have never gone to regular out-of-doors work in winter. And as they are paid only for what they earn, if from any circumstance they cannot work, they and their families must starve and die.

* A river in Indiana, North America; on whose banks the bitterness of the cold detained him and his companions in a comfortless log cabin, in the winter of 1845.

I have it very much at heart to get associations formed of the principal people of this county, and in three or four other counties, who should be prepared to step in with relief in cases of extremity. Another object with me is, if possible, to get some employment set on foot for the women, who, if they could earn but twopence per day, it would be worth all the effort I could make. I find that in some places the ladies want to set them to knitting; I can think of no way in which we could so effectually help them to a little clothing, if we could get them to knit Guernsey frocks, and they could be got into the hands of the poor men at very reduced prices, or be given them.

I hope my cough is a little better; and I have not been tried with so much distressing exhaustion and incapacity for the least effort as yesterday.

13th.—I had a good little meeting this morning, and thought of you. I had the comfort of feeling myself in the way of my duty; and a little hope that I should not be left to myself, and very earnest desire that it might not be so.

Dungloe.—We are now on our way through the very wilds of Donegal, baiting at a miserable village—miserable enough at all times; but, if they tell us the real truth, famine is at their doors; for there is not a peck of meal, as they say, to be bought in all the place, and unless they can get it from Letterkenny or Derry, the people must perish. Happily the frost and snow are going; and we must hope that a fresh supply will soon arrive.

We left our warm and home-like quarters at Guidone before sunrise this morning; the journey was formidable in prospect, and there were those who would have frightened us away from the attempt. We had a good horse belonging to a man at Glenties, where we were going, and an active mare of Lord George's for our leader, with one of his labouring boys for postillion. Thus far we have got through beyond my expectation. My companions, mounted on two ponies which they hired in the village, are gone two or three miles into the country, to see a clergyman of the Establishment, of

whom we have heard a good report for his kind-heartedness and public spirit.

I have been calling on the priest, and got him to take me to a baker's shop to procure a supply of bread, and then to show me the way to a few of the most destitute families in the village. It is a way of getting into the interior of their condition which does indeed elicit a mass of misery that cannot be described. The priest said he had received £10 from the Calcutta fund, with which he had been selling out Indian meal at reduced or cost price. I do not wish to be too sanguine, but hope we shall succeed in getting up an association for the north-west district of the county.

On our way from Guidone, I had what was to me a satisfactory interview with Wybrants Olphert, a gentleman of property and influence who has for several years been resident on his estate. We took with us Charles Stewart, a well-disposed and useful clergyman, who helped us capitally in our object. They fall in with our plan of giving a little employment to the women. I have sent to Dublin for a gross of wooden needles, and offer, as I go along, to advance a little capital for the purchase of yarn: the women are good knitters. Lord George Hill gives great encouragement to the domestic employment of his tenantry, and is successful in finding a market for all the stockings of their manufacture.

My object is both to find employment for the women, and to furnish the men with at least one warm, comfortable garment, which many of them will greatly need during the next three or four months, by which time their rags will no longer hold together. And we must devise some means to help the poorest of the cottars to a few articles of clothing for their children; that which now half covers them will soon be gone. There is an article of cheap domestic manufacture worn by the small farmers that would be just the thing, or possibly something still cheaper would be bought in England. The public works are not begun in this part of the county.

How the very poorest of the cottars are kept alive it is hard to imagine; no potatoes, no corn; or if they had a few oats, they are in some cases nearly gone, and in others all

eaten; none saved, or likely to be saved, for seed; no work—no wages—no credit; so that even were provisions much cheaper than they are, they have not the means of buying them. Many of the small farmers are selling what little they have of live stock, and the sooner it goes the better, as it will now bring them something; but if the animals have all the meat starved off their bones, they will bring them next to nothing at all. Few things touch me much more than to hear of their selling their poultry just at the time when they might be likely to make a few pence by their eggs; and then at last their cow, and nothing, nothing left! Our host at Guidone told me that when Lord George Hill came into possession of the property, not a single farmer had a pig. By his exertion and assistance they had become so generally supplied, that there was not a small farmer without one. Now, in consequence of the dearth of potatoes, they are all gone, not a single farmer in the neighbourhood has one.

20th. First-day evening. Ballyshannon.—We are now leaving the county of Donegal after a great deal of difficult, and what sometimes had the appearance of perilous, travelling. It has been often to me a time of suffering from general inability; but I have not been to any great degree,—indeed I say it with thankfulness, but little,—hindered from what I have thought the duty of the day.

25th. Ballina. I am entering upon what in some respects is a new field of labour in Mayo, &c., with a tolerably submissive mind, and perhaps as good heart as I could reasonably look for. I think it best, as much as possible, to shut my ears against all that would have the effect of frightening me away from what I think to be the path of my duty. Sometimes I have a little of the renewing of that feeling by which I am enabled to put my trust in the Lord: that is the best of all, and proves to be my main stay and support. It is a mercy my health and strength are a little restored; for some days I was in such a state of exhaustion and incapacity that I could neither move, nor speak, nor think, without bringing on most distressing and violent retching,—and the cold was most nipping,—but I am better.

1847. *1st mo. 2nd. Castlebar.*—Thanks for thy letters. I had been much oppressed in mind, and worn by fatigue and cold, in the course of a long day's journey from where we lodged last night,—a very small village in the midst of the bogs and mountains, and in the midst of poverty and famine. Famine in its direst forms seems to be upon the increase from day to day; and it must increase whilst the people are one by one reaching to the end of their store of all that is eatable, and of all that they can turn into money to buy food. It has been brought home to me within the last few days in a way that almost overpowers me. I do not murmur at my lot: I thought I had counted the cost; but I did not know, and it is well I did not, what I was coming to. My strength often fails me; and when my efforts to do the little that comes upon me from day to day are disappointed, I am perhaps unduly cast down.

I think I have never before passed through such suffering of mind, unless I were to except those moments in which I have seemed to myself racked with unutterable intensity of feeling in thinking of the horrors of the slave-trade. Sometimes I get a little relief to my agony in tears; but that is what I cannot command. I wish to be patient, and not to give up my trust in the Lord. In my most favoured moments, a sense of the omniscience of God, and that his tender mercies are over all his works, helps me to stay my mind on Him, and to hope in his care and love.

The horrors of famine were brought home to me this morning in a way in which thou canst understand me. There was the body of a dead horse lying by the road-side near our lodging-place. The driver said that our landlord told him that eight horses had perished there for want of food. This tells a tale of misery that can be understood only by those who know the circumstances of these poor people, and how thinly that country is inhabited; how few there are that have a horse; and what a horse is to the man that has one, and the effort and the sacrifice he would make to keep him alive.

I hear of death from starvation wherever I go. I suppose them to be cases in which people are worn down by long

fasting, and the eating of bad or unwholesome food, and that for days or weeks in succession, until they fall down and expire. If it be thus with them, what must be the condition of those that live, who are day by day, and almost all the day, enduring the misery, and all the sickening and the ravening, of extreme of hunger. It is this that brings with it the keenest anguish to my mind; it enters my very soul, and seldom leaves it through the day. I have put up my prayer that I might be brought into the way of these as I go along; and in some instances I have had the hope, and comfort in that hope, that my prayer has been answered.

It has been a true encouragement to me on my journey, particularly in our travels in Donegal, to have met with pious, and such as I believe to be truly Christian people, who are industriously and unsparingly devoting themselves to the help and relief of those by whom they are surrounded. They feel that the judgments of the Lord are in the earth; that his hand is heavy upon them. They do not give themselves up to despondency; but are using efforts equal, I believe, to their means, and making it their sole object in life, from week to week, to do all they can to relieve the wants of the poor. I have seldom met with such men as J. V. Stewart, Archdeacon Fenwick, and John Hamilton of St. Germans, near Donegal, nephew to the Duke of Wellington. Whether or not my coming may have answered much good purpose to the sufferers themselves I must leave; but possibly it may have been a little helpful and cheering, though it does not become me to say so, to those who are almost worn down by their endeavours to do what they believe to be their duty. One very striking feature of the times, and I have met with it in many places, is that the calamity seems very much to have softened down the asperity of party feeling; people now act together who had for years, it may have been all their life long, stood aloof from each other. As Colonel Gore, lieutenant of the county of Sligo, told me last week, "We have but the one thing to think of, and that occupies all our minds."

CHAPTER XL.

DEATH OF JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY—FAMINE IN IRELAND, CONTINUED.

In the midst of his arduous engagements in Ireland, William Forster received the unexpected and affecting intelligence of the serious illness of his much loved friend Joseph John Gurney. "I am truly grieved," he writes to his wife, "to hear that dear Joseph is so unwell: I acutely feel what he is to me every way. Thy mention of the death of Samuel Hoare and of dear John Wilkinson has brought me to some tender feeling. To know that it is well over with those who were about to depart is not to me what it is to have those in suffering who are so very near to me."

On receiving a worse account, he again writes to his wife:—

1st mo. 8th. Castlebar.—Thy letter of the 4th has plunged me into such a depth of sorrow that I find it difficult to write; it speaks of a little hope, but I fear there was no reasonable ground to entertain it. If Prout acknowledges himself discouraged, and if "he was sinking," unless there was some extraordinary and unexpected revival, I think our beloved friend must have passed away within a few hours after the time when thy letter was written. I have seemed, almost ever since, to have been treading the valley of the shadow of death with a heavy step, and borne down with an unutterable burden of sorrow. Through the tender care graciously extended towards me, I have been kept from any great conflict of mind. I do not lay claim to any very strong feeling of

religious duty on the occasion, past or present; but I believe I am not here in the counsel of my own will, and that my coming was in that love over which I have no control, and which I could not have resisted without bringing myself into trouble. I cannot but remember how much he did at last to help me off, though in his kindness and love he would have kept me at home.

As William Forster anticipated, his beloved friend died on the 4th of First Month, 1847. On having the sorrowful tidings of the event confirmed, he again writes home:—

1st mo. 11th. Westport.—Not till this evening, and that but for a moment, have I had so much as a transient sense of that in which I could rejoice and give thanks—the thought that our most tender, faithful, helpful friend has passed through the depths of the valley—that to him there is no more suffering—"no more death"—no fear—no conflict now—no more of the tormenting of the wicked one, and not so much as the possibility of falling away—nothing but peace, joy, and love; such joy as, by the utmost working of his mind, even under that measure of God's Holy Spirit that sometimes rested upon him, he could but imperfectly comprehend—such as has not entered the heart of man to conceive—nothing now seen as through a glass darkly—nothing—nothing for evermore, but light, life, and immortality!

12th. Achill Island.—There are few less in the way of noting and keeping days than I am, but I think this will be a marked day to me as long as I live. I was one with the mourners throughout the whole morning; a hopeful, thankful, comforted mourning, I can believe it to have been. I went with you from stage to stage, until I thought you had left the grave, and had retired to take comfort in that Gospel in which is the everlasting blessing.

With "sorrow upon sorrow," yet "not left comfortless," William Forster again patiently pursued

the work of the good Samaritan, and thus continues his narrative :—

Meeting with an unexpected opportunity of sending some relief to a remote part of the barony of Erris, respecting which I had been anxious, I came off to this island with a peaceful mind. We had a better horse than usual, it was a remarkably mild winter's morning, and, feeling myself in a fairer state of health than sometimes, there was much to be enjoyed and I was not insensible to it. As the day advanced, it turned out to be remarkably fine; the mountain scenery was magnificent, and the bright gleams of sunshine upon the water most beautiful. I thought how much he would have enjoyed it—a cheerful sunny day was such a pleasure to him; and it was just the sort of day I imagined he would have wished for his funeral.

The people of Achill are in a state of greater starvation than I expected to find them. I hope to make arrangement for some supply to at least a few of the more destitute before I go away. There is a store of Indian corn and meal for those who have a little money left, or anything they can turn into money; but what can that avail to those who have none: nothing at all? What the old people and the infirm, and those who cannot work if they had it to do are living on, and how they exist from day to day, I cannot imagine; and those of whom I make the inquiry cannot tell me, except it may be that one and another now and then give them a small handful of meal. The cloud seems thickening and darkening every hour. It is very affecting to me; and I think one of the most fearful features of the times, is that men of high standing, the principal gentlemen of the country, are breaking down and sinking into hopelessness. I made some acquaintance at Sligo with Colonel Knox Gore, the lieutenant of the county, and a large proprietor. At that time he was energetically and laboriously devoting himself to the good of the people, working every day of the week, as I thought, with a hopeful mind, and with confidence that they would struggle through. But I was concerned to hear from Sir Richard

O'Donnell, yesterday morning, that he had had a letter from him written in quite a desponding mind—that things were hourly growing worse—that soon there would be no food—and that thousands *must* die.

I have had two or three letters from G. V. Jackson of Oranmore: he is one of the most active men in the county. Upon going more thoroughly into the state of the poor, he found things to be worse than he had imagined, and he had spoken to us of their being very bad. I have done something towards forming a central committee for Mayo; but I have had no help in it, and I am soon discouraged, much sooner damped and put down than many are aware of; this was what I always dreaded most before I came. I do not know that I can leave the county satisfied without further effort; possibly I may find the Marquis of Sligo at Westport on my return, or he may come before I set off for Connemara, and that may open the way to do something more.

We came to breakfast at Sir R. O'Donnell's yesterday morning: they were most kind and friendly. Lady O'Donnell and her sister Margaret Glendinning entered very warmly with me into the state of their poor. There is a population of no less than 25,000 on their estates, mostly small farmers, besides the wretchedly poor; such as they did not know were in existence until these times came—those who had never anything but potatoes to eat, and, having them, had all that they wanted. He took me to the relief committee, where there was a long discussion on the domestic employment of their poor women, in order to provide for them without their labouring at men's work on the public roads, &c. We see more or less of this in almost every gang in this county. And then he took me to his flax loft, to see a new flax mill that he has been building. He inherited his property under heavy incumbrances; but by good management and industry he has already greatly relieved himself.

13th. Achill Island.— shall be interested in hearing how my scheme for a supply of clothing to the poorest of the people seems to take. It will require a great effort, but I think it might be done without any very large amount of

individual sacrifice. I have been doing what I could in almost every place to promote the employment of the women, and I hope something will be effected. I long to have authority to give orders for the making of some hundred yards of domestic flannel, such as they make in Connaught from their own wool,—spun and woven in their own cabins: it might go to the clothing of thousands now almost naked.

I had a cold ride across the island, most wild and dreary. I was looking out for the eagles. They say there are many that build in the clefts of the rock in the mountains; but I could not see them. We found the sea very rough at the ferry. Our landlord, a remarkably kind and civil man, quite affectionate, brought a large boat, and we were soon safely over.

27th. Tuam.—The bishop called, and was very pressing upon me to take up my abode at the palace: I think I am not wrong in having declined to accept this invitation. I am to breakfast there to-morrow. They tell me there is a great deal of dysentery.

I have great hope that the good women of Galway will act up to their promise. They were most of them in active life, and it was quite cheering to see so much of what I took to be an evidence of true Christian piety, and of that godly zeal which stirs up the believer to good works; and it was very pleasant to see how much the Protestants were desirous of getting the Catholics to work with them. I gave orders for two pieces of flannel, one hundred yards each. It continually comes home to my consideration, what it would be to add one-fourth, or it might be even in some cases one-third or one-half, to the earnings of the father, if we could get employment for the daughters as well as their mothers; and of course it would add so much to the food of the country people, where food is to be had. The bishop invited me to the relief committee. I went, and was much interested by the people I met there, particularly a Roman Catholic gentleman, O'Kelly, full of heart and good sense. It was affecting to hear so many of them express themselves in the tone and language of despondency. I thought it my duty to ask

permission to say a few words on that point; perhaps they did not fall to the ground. It evidently cheered their hearts when I told them what Friends in Ohio were doing.

29th. Athenry.—I had a fine afternoon for the ride; and soon found something to do on my arrival at this place. I have what I think a pretty full day's work for to-morrow; it helps to satisfy me that I am not out of the path of duty. The more I give myself to the work, in the simplicity of faith, looking neither right nor left, confining myself to the relieving of the destitute and increasing the comforts of the poor, the more peaceful I am in mind, and the more I feel that which reconciles me to all that I have to do from day to day.

I made a little intimacy this morning with the curate of Tuam. He is a tender-spirited man, religiously devoted to his calling. I did not think the worse of him for a hitch that he has in conscience on the union of the Church with the State; of course, I did not ask him for it. I called at the bishop's this morning, and was glad to find they had not lost sight of the associating for visiting the sick, &c. They had evidently come to some arrangement with the wives and daughters of some of the principal people of the place, and I thought were really in earnest about it. I put a supply of rice and arrow-root at their disposal, and money enough to start the operation.

Seventh-day, 30th. Roscommon.—I hope my visit to Ballinasloe did not go for nothing. We came by the mail from Loughrea. On Fifth-day I introduced myself to the Protestant clergyman. I found him civil and cordial, ready to lend me a hand in forming an association. Whilst there the Earl of Clancarty came in. He said Lady Clancarty was interested in the employment of the women. In the course of two or three hours a letter came, asking me to call. She gave proof of her heartiness in the object, making a great effort to put me in possession of her wishes.

There is not a class among the poor for whom I have a more tender feeling than the poor tailors, who used to work for that part of the population who have now no money to spend in clothing—many of them very unfit to be turned out to work upon the roads, or for any other out-door

employment. What the poor labouring men are to do for shoes, till they can find money to buy them, I cannot see: it often brings me to much painful anxiety.

2nd mo. 3rd. Loughrea. My first visit was to William O'—— (he has the title of Honourable and Reverend). Their means are small; but it was touching to me to see the effort they were making in a quiet way for the help of the poor. They had bought rice in Dublin on their own account, and his wife had been selling it out on a small scale. She gave me her account of sales, which I send as evidence of what can be done with a little money; and surely they are the sort of people to whom one would be glad to entrust it. I then went to D—— P——; everything upon a large scale, evidently people of high standing. They have been doing a little in the making of soup, and I saw it in operation; they have accommodation for carrying it out upon a much larger scale, but he gave me to understand that it did not suit him to advance the money for it; and on showing me an account of deficit in his rents from his small tenants, I confess I had no hesitation in offering him a donation. If such people will accept £10 or £15, I think we can hardly doubt its being wanted; at any rate if it goes to the feeding of those who would not have been fed, the object is answered. I then went to Robert Daly's, of Castle Daly, a large Roman Catholic proprietor: he was out about the public works; however, his wife soon came to an understanding of the part I wanted the ladies to take, gave me her name as agent, and I thought her heart too. . . . . I found in another town they had adopted a new plan for supplying the country by sending out provisions for sale; they had sold a ton the day before in a village a few miles distant. . . . . it ought to be known, and might be very useful in other places. The ladies at Gort had formed themselves into an association, and were going to make soup on a large scale; they had already a small concern in the town, and two or three in the neighbourhood. I told them about the clothing: they gave me some names. . . . . I then called on Redmond Burke, of Armagh, landed proprietor in the neighbourhood, living in Gort for

the winter. I had made his acquaintance at the meeting at Galway. His wife is a woman of very enlarged active benevolence, and had undertaken to get some flannel made for me—just the sort of woman to help in that concern. . . .

Fourth-day. Ballinasloe.—At Gort I fell in with Robert Gregory, father of the M.P. for Dublin. I found him very friendly, and wanting help for the neighbourhood of Kinverra, lying near the coast. He apologized for not inviting me to Coole Park, as his wife had just received the account of the death of a very near relation; but soon there came a note from the lady begging me to go; and a few minutes afterwards the sister of Robert Gregory arrived to take me over in their car. I was glad to go, and found them all most warm in their hospitality; people of high standing, everything about the house wearing the appearance of refinement and elegance,—had lived abroad for several years—beautiful statuary—costly library—high-bred manners; but, best of all, deeply interested about the poor, and wanting to help them. The lady incidentally said that, previous to the resolution proposed by the Irish nobility, they had discarded all luxuries from their table. Their heart and mind were evidently full of the misery and distress that surrounded them.

Redmond Burke's wife came over with us: they entered together very heartily into my wishes for the employment of the women, and I hope they will do something. They wanted me to stay and go to Kinverra; but, after making some arrangements for soup, &c., I thought it best to come off. . . . .

Robert Gregory returned before we left, thoroughly harassed by the managers of the public works, who had thrown 300 of their men out of employment, and out of bread too, as far as I could gather, without any notice; however, on his own responsibility he had set them to work again. I thought it looked well for the M.P. that, in his letter to his mother from London, he had written about nothing else but the poor at Kinverra, begging them to set themselves to work. We had a long cold ride to Killchrist. I did not forget a poor creature I had visited in a hut on the roadside the day

before: it was the most appalling instance of misery and wretchedness I have seen or heard of. The poor man had no wife—three children—not an article of furniture except two or three cooking utensils—no fire—a large part of the thatch torn away; and there he lay on a little coarse hay in a corner of the cabin. I wanted him to go to the poorhouse. No; all he wanted was food; and if he could only get that he should soon be able to go to work again. He said he wanted nothing but stirabout. Of course I supplied his need as far as money would go; and I found on my return that he had had perhaps as much food as was necessary for him; but what was most affecting to me, and showed the state of the country, was that when I spoke of him to a well-dressed young man who was standing in the road just by the cabin, apparently a farmer's son, he said it was as much as they could do to get food for themselves—that they could do nothing for others. It was a striking and very affecting contrast to the former state of the Irish peasantry, who used to be so kind one to the other. . . . .

At the Burkes' I heard a very sad report from Galway, where the ladies had entered upon their work: her sister wrote that their visits had led them into lanes that they did not know were in existence, and had brought them into acquaintance with almost indescribable misery, and that they had met with two women mad with hunger. It gave me the hope that my endeavours were not all thrown away. . . . I think we cannot possibly do better than keep these working committees of ladies liberally supplied, and get them established in all the large towns. I had a pleasant visit at J. G——'s, and was glad to find that arrangements had been made for assembling the ladies: there was really a goodly company. They all seemed anxious to help on the object. I imagine they were all Roman Catholics, with the exception of G——'s wife, who was appointed secretary.

The town (9,000 inhabitants) was divided into two districts, six visitors to each: to enable them to commence their operations immediately I gave them £10, two hundredweight of rice, and one stone of arrow-root. I then told them all

about the clothing, and they are most willing to act; and I should hope, if left to themselves, they will act well.

9th. Roscommon.—I wish to speak and write of any little sense of duty that may be granted me in very lowly terms, as I know I ought to do; but I must confess I believe it may be most for my peace and good to be given up for a while longer to sympathize with this poor people in their many afflictions. Under this impression my mind is for the moment brought into quietness; and perhaps I may say, into something of confidence also. In our reading just now, I was broken into tenderness before the Lord on those words of our Saviour, "How much, then, is a man better than a sheep?" It has brought me to think of the tenderness of his compassions; and to believe that He does not despise the feeblest efforts of those who love Him, in their endeavours to follow his steps, even though it be at an immeasurable distance.

There is a deep snow this morning, and probably it may impede our travelling. I wish to try and get to Castlerea to-night; to-morrow I shall probably think it best to make an effort to see two or three people on my way to Claremorris and that neighbourhood, and so onwards to Ballinrobe.

Castlerea.—We have had very cold and wearisome travelling in deep snow and frost. I wished to see Robert Blundell, rector of a union of parishes in Mayo, Galway, and Roscommon, consisting of a very large rural population. I called upon the nephew of Lord Mount Sandford; he wished to go with me. They both entered warmly into one of my objects, which they could not but acknowledge to be of little less than national importance—an attempt to do something towards providing shoes for the poorest and most destitute of the labourers on the public works. In the conversation I had with Lord Clonbrock, he expressed himself very strongly upon it; and he is a thoroughly practical man. My plan would be for the men to pay one-third out of their weekly earnings by small instalments, and the remaining two-thirds to come from the funds raised by the British subscriptions; it might lead to an expenditure of some hundreds, or two or three thousand

pounds. I can hardly see how money can be spent to better purpose; if their employment be such that they cannot work without shoes, and cannot provide the article out of their earnings. I am sure I had not need to take anything new on hand, but as this has come before me in close connexion with other objects, I do not know how to put it aside.

About this time, at the urgent request of the Committee in Dublin, William Forster broke off a little from his toilsome and distressing labours, and came to the city to confer with the Committee on their future course of action.

On his return to the scenes of starvation and suffering, he writes from Sligo, on the 24th of Second Month:—

We arrived early in the evening; upon the whole a pleasant journey to me, without, as far as I can recollect, a single moment of misgiving. And I regard it as a special mark of the tender pity of our heavenly Father towards one of the very feeblest of his children, that I feel myself at home, at my post and in the path of duty. In the midst of sorrow, famine, disease, and death, happy and hopeful—at the same time I feel that the hand of the Lord is heavy. But it is his hand, and a sense of that, as it is now renewed upon my mind, ministers to my comfort, and peace, and trust. He is wise and good, the perfection of wisdom and goodness; and in all his dealings there is wisdom, justice, and love. So that I now know that there is a place of anchorage for me; not only as relates to that which is pressing hard upon me at the present hour, but in that which often breaks in upon me, and bears down my soul into the depths of horror, darkness, and distress, in thinking upon the cruelty and suffering inseparable from the African slave-trade.

Without date.—I have found most quietness of mind in looking towards the course that I had thought was pointed out to me; there is much of a cross and much trial in it. But I sometimes feel that which is not at my command, which

bears up my spirit over all, and by which I am, as I think, helped to hold on and to press forwards. I have often asked that my steps might be ordered of the Lord; and now I should fear the consequence to myself if I were to rebel against that which, I believe, is in his blessed ordering.

It might seem that the measures of Government would have set me at liberty from much that has occupied my time and mind, and to a certain extent they do. But there is that which no poor-law, nor merely legal provision of any kind, can do; and it is in that line of service I shall probably find that I have most to do during the remainder of my visit; endeavouring to promote voluntary associations for the personal domestic visiting and relief of the sick,—now, alas! so much needed; for, wherever I go, pestilence is treading upon the heels of famine, and I am earnest that the people, especially in the large towns, should be prepared to meet it.

I have not nerve—there is no need to tell my weakness—to look upon the suffering of the afflicted; it takes too much possession of me, and almost disqualifies me for exertion. But what a comfort to believe, and to be made sure, that there is One who does look upon it all. The thought of that brings me into tenderness before Him, and quickens my soul to a little renewal of hope in his mercy, and pity, and love. It was enough to have broken the stoutest heart to have seen the poor little children in the union workhouse yesterday—their flesh hanging so loose from their little bones, that the physician took it in his hand and wrapped it round their legs. I have seen some adults in the same condition. And if it be so with the little that comes under my notice in my very transient visits, what must it be with the much larger proportion, those that I do not see, nor even hear of. The two forms of disease most prevalent are dysentery and dropsy, and some cases of low fever. In establishing the Ladies' Association, I have thought it right to put a quantity of good rice and arrow-root at their disposal. The poor people have been so much used to potatoes and nothing else, that they have to be taught to cook the rice, and the arrow-root must be prepared for them.

The employment of the women in their own cabins, and the right disposal of the clothing when it comes, is an object with me wherever I go; and almost everybody seems alive to its importance as I endeavour to put it before them. In the towns, and many of the villages and country places, people are at work doing what they can; and they are doing much: but still there are many places, mostly small towns and rural districts, almost or entirely neglected. I do what I can as I go along, little as it is. I had hoped to have got some large measure adopted to have met their case; but I fear I must now give it up. If the Government do not put their new law into effective operation, they will soon have the people dying on their hands by hundreds and thousands; for in such places they have nothing to keep them alive, nor anybody to look after them.

If I pursue my journey, my present intention is to go from hence to Roscommon; thence, in a zigzag direction, towards Ballinrobe, in the county of Mayo, and across the country to Swineford and Foxford, where I have heard of a great deal of wretchedness, and to Ballina, and then to Sligo. Another visit to that place bears heavily upon my mind, and I feel much interested for some parts of the county where I have not yet been: perhaps I may go into the northern parts of the county of Leitrim, and finish off with the county of Longford. My heart sinks at the writing of it: but as that word comes before me, "Sufficient for the day," I hope to meet it all in a trustful mind, and to try to do my duty without expecting that it can or will turn to much account, and there to leave it.

3rd mo. 7th. Ballinrobe.—If in heavenly goodness my health should not give way, I hope I may be enabled to accomplish that which I have believed to be laid upon me in this county by the end of this week, or in the week following. I have never been able to make arrangements far before me; so far as I have set myself to work it has almost always ended in disappointment. We are here in the midst of destitution and disease: famine in its direst form is doing the work of death. Surely it will not now be long before we have arrivals

from abroad, and the Indian corn of 1846 be brought in, to feed these starving and perishing multitudes.

8th.—It is impossible for anyone to conceive the horrors of famine unless they come into its midst. However, I am thankful to say we have done something worth coming for. The most destitute of the poor of this place will not perish for the next two or three weeks from the want of food, if those into whose hands we have put it do their duty; and I have met with some good people for the care of the sick.

I have a good letter from Catherine Plunkett, of Bray; she has set their tenantry in the mountains of Mayo to work, spinning for flannel, &c.; and I hope to be allowed to keep them at it for some time to come. This domestic industry, if we can but carry it on, will, I hope, be a real good. Nothing pleases me more than to find the young entering into my plans. I give them the hope that they will have the flannel, at least the first hundred yards, to make up for their own poor. It ought to be known how the first ladies of the land are exerting themselves, weighing out meal, seeing after soup, &c. I have never met nor heard of anything like it among the same class in England.

3rd mo. 12th. Sligo.—The liberality of friends in Philadelphia and of people in America, far exceeds my expectation; and I think our friends are doing their part nobly.

3rd mo. 21st. Lurgan Bay.—I reached Sligo on Fifth-day evening, and on Sixth-day morning went to Cliffory to visit a wretchedly poor population on the shores of the bay of Sligo, principally tenants of Lord Palmerston. I was glad to find a gentleman there come to conduct the draining of the land under Act of Parliament, and whose present business it is to look after the people; but, do what you can, it is in such places a time of extreme destitution and suffering. They are making arrangements upon a large scale for shipping many of the smallest of the tenantry to America, which can hardly fail to improve their condition; and, such is their very low state of degradation, they can hardly make a change from bad to worse. I do not like to be meddlesome, or to seem to be so;

but, having been there, I believe I must see Lord Palmerston on my return, and try whether something cannot be done for these poor people on their arrival on the western shores of the Atlantic. I know a little about new countries; and think there are points upon which I should feel myself at home in reference to emigration.*

29th. Manor Hamilton.—I have been much cheered by hearing of the large arrivals of grain from America: the price has fallen more rapidly than I could have anticipated. I now hope and trust that, in the goodness of divine Providence, the famine may be stayed; that the people will not die from actual want of food. I long to get the poorest of the people supplied with flannel garments; as much as possible all to be made of their own domestic manufacture.

4th mo. 2nd. Swanlinbar.—It was late in the afternoon when I reached Florence Court. I had driven from the house when I met Lord Enniskillen coming to take me to see their bakery and soup-kitchen; they have a large concern in hand, and I have no doubt are doing real good: it was touching to me to hear such people speaking so gratefully of the help that had been sent them out of England. They were very pressing on me to stay the evening; but I broke through and had a pleasant ride to Swanlinbar. I endeavoured to seek out those who care most for the poor, and found them very grateful for what they had received from Dublin. I hope I have done something in the way of providing a little employment for some of their poor women, which is one of my main objects wherever I go.

3rd. Belturbet.—I have been endeavouring to make the best of the time; and to turn the day to some good purpose. I have made a visit to their large union-house, and gone pretty much into the state of their young people, and found much to interest me, both in what I heard from some of the managers of the establishment, and in thinking over some of my own notions and schemes; many of which, considering my time of life, I am never likely to see brought into action.

* After his return William Forster had an interview with Lord Palmerston on the subject referred to; but the result is not known.

8th. Dublin.—Lord Farnham was most polite and kind, and really took pains to make my visit agreeable. I think he is interested about the poor, and wishing to do his duty; but they are much more favourably circumstanced at Cavan than at any place I have visited; and yet there is distress, if people could but search it out. I was glad of an opportunity when they were together, and the nieces and nephew in the room, to speak my mind very fully on the slave-trade; as I did both to Lord Sligo and Lord Clancarty, and at John Wynne's. I don't know that it answers any purpose; but, so long as it does exist, I find a satisfaction in bringing it before those who ought to feel it.

10th.—The report from the Castle was that the Viceroy was not in a state of health to receive a visit; but I have since seen the Under-Secretary, and endeavoured to put him in possession of my wishes. I had a long and full opportunity. He heard me patiently upon every point; and I think very generally admitted the importance of the objects I wished to bring before the Government.

I spoke on the want of clothing for the poor, and their utter inability to provide it for themselves; told him what I knew and had heard of the number of orphans and deserted children —of the want of employment for the females—of the destitute condition of poor servant girls, discharged by their employers in consequence of the pressure of the times and thrown upon the public—of the state of the multitudes of children in the union poor-houses.

I spoke my mind very freely on the importance of industrial education for those who have to get their bread by the labour of their hands, and threw out a suggestion for the establishment of educational institutions for that portion of the children which may be considered as permanent objects of the care of the State. I adverted to the want of better regulated and more extended means of obtaining medical assistance for the poor in rural districts, and of providing for the burial of the dead in cases of extreme poverty. He very kindly opened my way for communication with the local authorities in different parts of the country.

4th mo. 12th.—I am using all diligence, but cannot be sure that I shall get off to-morrow, most earnestly as I do wish it. What a mercy once more to get to dear old England again!

Long after his return from Ireland, he continued to be much occupied with the concerns of the "Central Relief Committee" in Dublin. He wrote many letters, obtained additional subscriptions among his friends, and was in other ways perseveringly interested in the present relief of the distressed, as well as in the permanent amelioration of the condition of the poor people with whom he had sympathized so largely, and among whom he had laboured so long and so efficiently.

CHAPTER XLI.

ENGAGEMENTS AT HOME—YEARLY MEETINGS—RELIGIOUS VISIT IN LANCASHIRE—ANTI-SLAVERY SERVICES AT HOME AND ABROAD.

THE remainder of the year 1847, and much of 1848, William Forster appears to have spent mostly at home; and there is little to record of his daily avocations. He deeply felt the removal of his beloved friend, J. J. Gurney; and his intercourse with the bereaved Earlham family was often of a very touching kind. His note-books again very briefly tell of almost incessant attention to the calls of friendship, the affairs of his own community and of various public institutions, and visiting the poor. The mention of his son's birthday calls forth the parental ejaculation, "The Lord bless, preserve and prosper him." Now and then, besides the notice of the early harvesting of his neighbour's wheat-field, there is an allusion to the cultivation of his own garden, the training of his vines, the gathering in of his apples and pears, and other little pursuits which he was fond of. Both he and his wife, beautifully sharing as they did in the fulfilment of the duties of a Christian life, took great delight in the rural occupations which their residence in the country brought within reach. They were both fond of flowers; but whilst the husband liked to see the highly cultivated exotic, beside the plant of indigenous

growth, the wife had more taste for the latter. Her ardent love of nature almost made her dislike everything artificial. The great originality and refinement of her character—her perfect naïveté—and, at the same time, the inherent and acquired stores of her mind, and her most tender heart, displayed themselves in a remarkably close affinity with the simple yet magnificent works of the great Creator, untouched by the hand of man.

The Yearly Meeting of 1848 afforded William Forster an opportunity of again mingling with his brethren, and, as usual, he took a deep interest and an active part in its proceedings. His remarks were often of a striking character. The following note, taken of one of them, may not be unworthy of preservation :—

He spoke of the right estimate of a truly tender conscience—the importance of living in the fear of God, and of pressing after a growth in true tenderness of spirit. Then not only will Christ become more precious to our souls, and we shall be built up in Him, but it will please our Lord and Saviour to show us in what way He will dispose of the residue of our days. Let us be seeking unto God, that we may be kept alive in the Truth, be found wrestling in prayer that He will grant us grace to keep us from the pollutions that are in the world, and enable us to bring forth fruit to his praise.

He had felt tenderly for a certain class of our young people, whether placed with members of our Society or with those who are not; wishing that the Friends where they reside may take kind notice of such, and extend a word of encouragement or warning to them. There is a large amount of cultivation of the intellect now amongst Friends. He felt a tender care and solicitude that our young friends may be put in the way of attaining to a knowledge of what is supremely good

—a fear lest, in the multitude of reading, they are not sufficiently alive to the importance of serious reading, of reading Friends' books—not sufficiently acquainted with the doctrines and principles of our religious Society.

A little glimpse of his thoughts and doings about this time is given in the following letter:—

To Ann D. Alexander.

Earlham Road, *Tenth Month 31st, 1848.*

My dear Friend,—I believe our friend, C. Clarkson, may be set at ease respecting the two books of the "Minutes of the Abolition Society." They are, I have no doubt, perfectly safe under the custody of John Scoble, at the Anti-slavery Office. I have written to make inquiry respecting them; but, as I suppose, he is over head and ears in the concerns of the Peace Congress, I am afraid I shall not get an immediate answer. I have been very little in London since the Yearly Meeting—only passing from station to station—or, I believe, I should not have failed to ask him respecting them.

It was kind of thee, dear friend, to tell me of your aged father, and of my dear ancient friend—almost the last of her generation—thy aunt A. A. (late of York). She is longer detained from her rest than wec ould have anticipated. Tell her, when thou seest her, with a message of my love and unity, that such a rest as is prepared for her is well worth waiting for, even if she has to wait under the pressure of many infirmities.

I returned home rather more than a week ago in order to see ——; he was thought to be in so critical a state. I considered it very doubtful whether I should find him living. The visit, though short, was a comfort to me, and much more than repaid me for all the little effort I had made. He was clear, collected, and in a lowly, peaceful mind; and, if such an one as I may venture an opinion, it was that peace which we, all of us, shall be glad to enjoy as we draw near to the gates of the grave.

I hope to go back again into Yorkshire before the end of next week. I regret that I shall be likely to miss the visit of G. and S. Howland, who would probably be at Rawden, either yesterday or to-day. It is quite a blank to me.

I am, in that which wears well, if I know anything about it,

Your loving friend,

WILLIAM FORSTER.

In the early part of the Twelfth Month he was liberated by his Monthly Meeting to attend the Lancashire Quarterly Meeting, and to visit the meetings of Friends in that county. Whilst in the North on this occasion he also spent a little time with his son, near Bradford.

Soon after his return home, he went up to London to attend a special "Meeting for Sufferings," which had been called in consequence of the continued existence of slavery and the slave-trade, and to which Friends in the country had been invited. On the 25th of Second Month, 1849, William Forster thus writes of that meeting in a letter to his wife:—

I humbly trust that in some small measure the counsel of Truth was granted in our solemn deliberations, and that in the conclusion to which Friends were brought they were owned by a sense of our Saviour's love. The concern was weighty, and it opens before us a field almost too vast for the eye of faith. Friends were brought to believe that it was laid upon them to represent the wrongs and sorrows of Africa as occasioned by the slave-trade, and the cruelty and oppression of slavery as it exists in North America and the West Indies, not only to the governments of those nations most deeply involved in its guilt; but to call upon the nations of Christendom all the world over to use their influence in putting an end to these abominations. There was a large attendance of friends both from town and country, and a very general and unanimous expression of unity with the concern,

and a committee was appointed to prepare the memorial. I am thankful to say that I now feel greatly relieved of a burden which often seemed almost too heavy for me to bear. It may be that I have done my part, and that nothing further may be required of me; but that I wish to leave in the hands of Him who has thus far helped me beyond all that I could have asked or thought.

The Committee appointed to prepare the memorial alluded to, assigned the work of drawing it up to William Forster; and the essay which he produced to an adjourned meeting was, with very few alterations, agreed to, and directed to be presented to the ensuing Yearly Meeting.

In the meantime William Forster was occupied in carrying out another religious concern which remarkably illustrates both the wide range of his solicitude for the eternal well-being of his fellow-men, and the power which his feelings of Christian love could exert in leading him to undertake services from which his nature must have peculiarly shrunk. This has reference to an effort which he made during his stay in the metropolis, for the spiritual good of a class of persons who are commonly regarded as hardly within reach of Christian labour—the performers of public theatres. Not much is generally known of the circumstances and extent of this engagement; but, before he gave himself up to it, he passed through very deep exercise of soul. He obtained interviews with many of these persons, and was in almost all cases kindly received by them; besides speaking to them about their eternal interests, he put copies of the Holy Scriptures into their hands. A pleasing instance of the grateful recognition of these benevolent exertions, in both respects, is afforded by a

written acknowledgment addressed to him from the "Company of German Opera Performers," attached to one of the London theatres, signed by their Secretary, in which they express "their warm thanks for his kindness, manifested in a time of peculiar need, when it fared hard with them, and their earnest desire that both his Christian exhortations, and the gift of a Bible to each, may be blessed to them and their children after them, and produce fruit unto eternal life." Though the fruits of this labour of love may never be known till the day comes that shall bring all things to light, we are surely warranted in entertaining the belief that it will then be found not to have been "in vain in the Lord."

As one of the measures proposed regarding slavery, the Meeting for Sufferings had prepared the following memorial to our Queen, which was presented to her in person by William Forster, Samuel Gurney, Peter Bedford, and George Stacey, early in the Fifth Month:—

To Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Dominions thereunto belonging.

May it please the Queen,—We, the undersigned, thy dutiful and loyal subjects, representing the religious Society of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland, desire respectfully to approach the Throne, and in love to men, and, as we reverently believe, in our duty to God, to lay before thee a matter deeply affecting the well-being of a large portion of the great human family.

More than a century has elapsed since our religious Society first believed it to be a Christian duty to advocate the rights of the natives of Africa, and of those held in slavery in the

western world. With reverent thanksgiving to Almighty God, we recur to the successive acts of our Legislature abolishing the slave-trade, and subsequently releasing the slaves in our colonies from a state of cruel bondage.

The continuance of the trade in slaves, as prosecuted—contrary either to law or treaty—by the inhabitants of other countries, with all the wickedness inseparable from this unrighteous traffic, brings us into sorrow and distress. It engenders war in its direst forms, breaks the bonds of social life, reduces those who may survive the horrors of their transit by land and sea to hopeless slavery, and withal prevents the spread of the religion of our Holy Redeemer. We feel for the sufferings of the unoffending and helpless victims of these abominations; and we feel for the wrongs and miseries of the multitudes still living in slavery, and subjected to its cruel hardships and uncompensated toil; and we deeply deplore the degradation and the guilt which attach to the man-stealer, the slaveholder, and the dealer in his fellow man.

In consideration of the magnitude of this complicated iniquity, we are emboldened to ask thee, our gracious Queen, in thy intercourse with the rulers of those nations which are involved in these things, to use the influence of thy exalted station for terminating—by every pacific means—this desolating evil on the continent of Africa, and for conferring immediate and unconditional freedom on all those held in slavery. And we ask permission humbly and plainly to declare our conviction, that it is only in the extinction of Negro slavery that we can have any security for the utter termination of the African slave-trade.

May the Lord of heaven and earth bless thee, our beloved Sovereign, and thy Royal Consort, and may his blessing rest upon all thy house. We pray that, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, He may give thee wisdom and strength to open thy mouth for the dumb, to plead the cause of the poor and of him that hath no helper; that He may prosper thee in this work of righteousness; and that, if it please Him, thou mayest live to see the day in which Negro slavery and the slave-trade shall be abolished throughout the earth.

The Queen returned the following answer:—

I have received your Address with much satisfaction.

I fully appreciate the benevolent efforts of the Society of Friends on behalf of the suffering and oppressed.

I am deeply sensible of the wrongs and evils inflicted by the slave-trade, and my best endeavours will continue to be directed towards its extinction.

The ensuing Yearly Meeting entered into the subject with much seriousness. The memorial agreed to by the Meeting for Sufferings, which had been prepared as already mentioned, by William Forster, was presented to it. After deliberate consideration, it was adopted with much unanimity, and, in further carrying out its religious concern on this great question, the Meeting concluded to issue it in the form of the following address:—

TO SOVEREIGNS AND THOSE IN AUTHORITY IN THE NATIONS OF EUROPE, AND IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, WHERE THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS PROFESSED.

It having pleased the Lord to bring our fathers to a sense of the cruelty and wickedness of the African slave-trade, and of the injustice of holding their fellow men in slavery, they were strengthened to act upon the conviction wrought on their minds: they set at liberty those they held in bondage, and in their faithfulness they enjoyed the answer of a good conscience towards God. In that love which comes from Him their hearts were enlarged in love to their neighbour, and they could not rest without endeavouring to bring others to that sense of justice and mercy to which the Lord had brought them. From that time to the present day we have felt it to be laid upon us as a church to bear a testimony against the sin of slavery.

We have believed it to be our Christian duty to represent the wrongs inflicted upon the people of Africa, and repeatedly to plead the cause of the slave, in addresses to our own

Government. We rejoice and are thankful at the progress which has been made in this country and in other nations, in this cause of righteousness. Hundreds of thousands of slaves have been restored to liberty, and many of the nations of the civilized world are now, to a large extent, delivered from the guilt of the African slave-trade—a trade which the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, pronounced to be "a scourge which desolates Africa, degrades Europe, and afflicts humanity;" and for the suppression of which laws have been enacted. But our hearts are sorrowful in the consideration that this traffic is still carried on to a large extent, and that a vast amount of the population of the western world is still subject to the cruelty and the wrong of slavery. We desire to cherish this sympathy, and that we may behold the increase of it amongst all men everywhere.

One God is the Creator of us all; his eyes are in every place beholding the evil and the good. He will bring every work to judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. The families of the earth are all of one blood; all partakers in the same corrupt nature consequent upon the fall of man; all are alike subject to infirmity, disease and death, and all amenable to the same judgment after death. In the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ there is no respect of persons. He tasted death for every man; all distinctions of country, tongue and colour are merged in the immensity of that love in which the Father has sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Wherever the religion of the Gospel of Christ obtains its proper place within us, it softens our hearts; it brings man into fellow-feeling with his fellow-man; it brings him to regard every man as a brother, and to look upon the nations of the earth as all of one family. Amongst the millions of mankind there is not one beneath the notice of our Father who is in heaven: if we be partakers of his love, it leads us into pity for the forlorn, the helpless and the oppressed; and it constrains us to do what we can to mitigate the pain and to assuage the sorrows of those who are in suffering, to befriend the friendless, and to labour for the improvement of the condition of the most degraded of our race.

We are now assembled in our Yearly Meeting for the promotion of charity and godliness amongst ourselves, and according to our measure, for the spreading of truth and righteousness upon the earth. The condition of the natives of Africa, as affected by the continuance of the slave-trade, and that of the slaves in North and South America, and on the islands adjacent to that continent, have again awakened our sympathy. We believe it to be a duty laid upon us to plead the cause of these our fellow-men. We submit to the consideration of all those in authority in the nations which take upon them the name of Christ, the utter incompatibility of slavery with the divine law. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:" these were the precepts of our Lord. He spoke as never man spoke, and of his words He declared, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away:" they are the law of God's righteousness to all generations. We submit whether, without breaking this law, it be possible for man to hold or to claim a right to property in the person of his fellow-man; whether, admitting the supreme authority of this law, man can buy or sell his brother; whether he can withhold from those who labour for him that which is just and equal; whether the forced and uncompensated labour of the negro slave be not the breaking of this law; in short, whether any man or any of the nations of men can, in any one of these things, violate the law of the Lord and be guiltless.

For the space of three hundred years, the trade in slaves has been carried on from Africa to the opposite shores of the Atlantic; and this traffic in the persons of men is still prosecuted with unrelenting and unmitigated cruelty: year by year countless multitudes are torn from all that they hold dear in life, to pass their days in toil and misery. Men are still to be found so hardened in heart, so bent upon the gain of oppression, and so devoid of all that we deem the common feelings of humanity, as to spend their time and talents in pursuit of this criminal commerce. We forbear to enter in detail upon the large variety of human suffering, inseparable from this complicated iniquity. But we trust we do not take too much

upon ourselves, in asking those whom we now address to open their ears to the groaning of the oppressed, and to give themselves to sympathy with their sufferings; to think upon the war, and rapine, and bloodshed, attendant upon the capture of slaves in the interior of Africa—upon what they are made to endure in their transit to the coast and in their passage across the ocean; and not to shrink from making themselves acquainted with the horrors and the loathsomeness of the slave-ship; to follow the poor, helpless, unoffending negro, if he survive the suffering of the voyage, and to think upon his condition when landed upon a foreign shore, and entered upon a life of hard and hopeless servitude—it may be—to be worked to death in his early manhood, or to live to behold his children subjected to the same degradation and oppression as himself.

Blessed is the man that considereth the poor. The blessing of the Lord resteth upon him who, knowing the evil which attends his neighbour's lot in life, is stretching forth his hand for the relief of his poverty and distress; and his blessing is upon those who, like the Patriarch of old, are inquiring into the sorrows and hardship of the poor, the fatherless, and those that have none to help them. "The cause which I knew not," said he, "I searched out."

Our sympathies are wakened not for the native African alone, and the victims of the African slave-trade, but we feel for those who are living and labouring in a state of slavery, who were born in slavery, and possibly may die subject to its privation and its hardship. In those countries in which this system is upheld by law, man is degraded to the condition of a beast of burthen, and regarded as an article of merchandize. The slave has nothing in life that he can call his own; his physical powers, the limbs of his body, belong to another; it can scarcely be said that the faculties of his mind are his own. All that distinguishes him as a rational creature is, by the law of the State, treated as the property of another. He may be a man fearing God, and desiring to approve himself a disciple of Christ—we believe that there are such—whatever the consistency of his character as a Christian, and however

advanced in the cultivation of his mind, all avails him nothing: he is still a slave, and the law allows him nothing to look to in life but hopeless, helpless, friendless slavery. Endowed by his Maker with capacity for enjoyment like other men, he has his social affections; he may be honourably married, and in married life surrounded by offspring dear to him as his own flesh; but he knows not the day nor the hour in which he may be torn from his wife, or in which his children, at their tender age, may be snatched away, sold to the man-trader, and carried into far distant captivity. So long as slavery is upheld by law, we can have no security for the extinction of a trade in slaves. Such are the contingencies of the system under every modification of which it is capable, that, until slavery be abolished, men, women and children will, we fear, be imported from Africa, and be bought and sold like the cattle of the field; and the barbarities of the slave-market will continue to pollute the towns and villages of those islands in the West Indies in which slavery exists, and in the slave-holding countries of America.

The subject is so vast, and of such manifold atrocity, we think, that even the history of the whole world does not furnish a parallel to its crime. We deem it scarcely possible for a man of the most comprehensive mind fully to possess himself of the extent of the evil. The Lord alone doth know, none but the Infinite Mind can comprehend, the individual and the aggregate sufferings of those subjected to these enormities. God alone can reach the heart and awaken the conscience. It is our strong desire—we speak with reverence and fear—it is our prayer, that He may bring everyone to a sense of his own share in the guilt, and that, ceasing from his iniquity, the condemnation resting upon the man-stealer and upon those who trade in the persons of men may no longer attach itself to anyone bearing the name of a Christian; and that the slaveholder, whether he be more or less involved in the sin of oppression, may be brought to act in obedience to the law of impartial and uncompromising equity, and, without hesitation and without delay, restore to immediate and unconditional freedom every slave that he holds in bondage.

The Gospel of Christ is precious to us. Through the mercy of God to our souls we trust we are prepared, in some degree, to appreciate the means which, in his wisdom and love, He has provided for the redemption of the world, and the reconciling of man to Himself. In the word of ancient prophecy, Christ was promised, that in Him all the families of the earth might be blessed. We cannot but entertain the opinion that the enlightenment of multitudes of the inhabitants of Africa, and their participation in the privileges and the consolations of the Christian religion, have been much retarded by the evil deeds of many who have gone among them; and especially that the cruelty and wickedness of the slave-trade have done much to keep them in ignorance of Him who died for them. In that love which extends over sea and land, and seeks the happiness of the whole human race, we make our appeal to those with whom it lies; and respectfully press upon them to take their part, in accordance with the peaceable religion of Christ, in removing every impediment out of the way, that, through the grace of God, the African, of every tribe and every tongue, may be brought to the knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus.

May it please the Lord Almighty to bless those who reign, and those who are in authority, in every nation in which Christianity is acknowledged. May his wisdom preside in all their councils, and the law of his righteousness be the rule of their actions. May the Prince of Peace, Christ Jesus our Saviour, be honoured wherever his name is known. May his holy religion obtain its rightful influence in the earth; and the people become prepared to offer praise to God in the language uttered by the heavenly host—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

After its adoption by the Yearly Meeting, William Forster, under an impression of duty, with much religious feeling offered to be the bearer of this address to the sovereigns of Europe. His proposal was cordially united with by the meeting, and the following minute was entered upon its records:—

The disposal of an address to sovereigns and those in authority in the nations of Europe, and in other parts of the world where the Christian religion is professed, has obtained the solid consideration of this meeting, in the course of which our dear friend William Forster has, in a feeling manner, mentioned his willingness, under a sense of religious duty, and of the weightiness of the engagement, to be the bearer of the said address. The proposal of our beloved friend, who is a minister of the gospel well esteemed by us, has had our very serious attention, and cordial unity having been felt and expressed with him in this service, he is left at liberty and encouraged to proceed in the arduous undertaking as the Lord may open the way; and this meeting commends our dear friend to his preservation and care, and to the kind consideration of all those amongst whom he may come; and may it please the Almighty to bless the presentation and circulation of this address to the advancement of the great end in view—the promotion of righteousness in the earth.

Furnished with this document, William Forster lost no time in preparing to enter upon the prosecution of his arduous undertaking. But, before leaving England, he called with his brother J. F. on Lord Palmerston, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, to inform him of what he had in prospect. The minister kindly encouraged him in the work, and handed him a letter of introduction to influential persons on the continent, of which the following is a copy:—

Foreign Office, *June 16th, 1849.*

Sir,—This letter will be delivered to you by Mr. Forster, who is a member of the Society of Friends, and a person who has long devoted his time, his personal exertions, and his own pecuniary resources, to purposes of benevolence, both in England and Ireland.

His present object in travelling abroad is to present to foreign Governments an address from the Society of Friends,

to request the countenance and support and aid of those Governments for the suppression of the slave-trade and for the extinction of slavery.

Her Majesty's Government share most warmly the feelings and wishes which have been expressed in that address, and which have prompted Mr. Forster to undertake his proposed expedition; and although her Majesty's Government do not think it expedient to associate themselves in any way with the step thus taken, nor by any official participation to deprive that proceeding of the spontaneous and perfectly independent, and it may be said national, character which essentially belongs to it; yet they are desirous that her Majesty's diplomatic and consular agents at the places which Mr. Forster may visit should afford to that gentleman every assistance in their power in procuring access to those persons with whom he may wish to communicate, and in obtaining any other facilities which he may need in the progress of his journey.

I therefore recommend Mr. Forster, and the gentlemen who accompany him, to your special attention.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

PALMERSTON.

To her Majesty's Diplomatic Agents abroad.

About the same time William Forster, his brother Josiah Forster, and Peter Bedford, also had an interview with Prince Albert, who received them very kindly and allowed William Forster to read the address to him. He paid marked attention to its contents, and offered to take it to the Queen. He manifested much interest in the object, and William Forster was greatly pleased with his kindness and affability, and his ready acceptance of a copy of the "Life of John Woolman," which he presented to him.

Not long afterwards William Forster, accompanied

by his brother Josiah Forster, and Peter Bedford, went over into Holland and Belgium, for the purpose of giving circulation to the address in those countries. There was no opportunity to be gained for an interview with the King of Holland, but a copy was forwarded to him through his minister. The address was also presented to those in authority, to the ministers of religion of various denominations, and to other persons of influence in the cities and towns of both kingdoms.

With reference to his visit in Belgium, William Forster writes to his wife :—

7th mo. 20th. Valenciennes.—We had but a short distance to walk to the palace at Brussels where everything betokens a high standard of royalty. The king received us most kindly, and immediately entered into conversation on the state of Europe in a way that induced me to think he imagined our errand was connected with the peace question. I soon asked to read the address, to which he very readily gave his assent, and took me to the window for the benefit of the light. I was glad to be able to throw all my mind into what was before me: he stood with great attention the whole of the time. He expressed himself in strong terms on the character of the address, and said enough to satisfy me that it had taken some little hold on his mind. He then spoke upon the subject of slavery as if well acquainted with the question. Upon our alluding to Portugal, I thought he was far from displeased with our suggesting that his position might give him some influence with that Government. * He made allusion again to the state of public affairs, spoke with affection of his own people, and I think with real gratitude on the tranquillity in which the kingdom of Belgium has been preserved.

First-day night.—We held our little meeting this morning. I then went out determined to find the Protestants, if there

* It will be recollected that he was uncle to the King of Portugal.

were any, poor or rich. I heard of some in a small village about a mile off, and we very soon concluded on going there. I went out again to look over the Grand Hospital, an asylum for aged and infirm people and orphans, beautifully neat and clean, in comfort far exceeding the best of our union-houses that I have visited.

We made our way in the evening to the house of some religious people, not long since brought out of the Romish Church, living on a small patrimonial estate, and in addition renting a little land as market gardeners; there were two young men in the family, just such as one is always glad to meet with. From what I had heard of them, and the little we saw, I should believe them to be enlightened, humble, devoted Christians. They told us of many recently awakened; some who had not found courage to break loose from the bondage of the Church of Rome; and others, not a very large number to be sure, who were openly acting up to their convictions. They seemed very much left to themselves as to instrumental aid; but they meet regularly for religious instruction and public worship.

In the course of the few weeks spent on the continent on this occasion, William Forster, as a minister of the gospel, several times availed himself of opportunities which presented to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to those with whom he was thus brought into contact. After this first effort in the great cause to which he had devoted himself, he and his companions returned to England.

He had long felt a deep interest in the efforts made to obtain the abolition of capital punishment; and when any case occurred, in which a criminal had to undergo the utmost penalty of the law, it was a great affliction to him. The following letter alludes to a case of that kind:—

To A. D. Alexander.

Fourth Month 27th, 1849.

My dear Friend,—I have just been wishing I could send thee, and my good friend thy husband, such a message as would make you sure that I hold you in remembrance with affection and gratitude. Pray have the kindness to send me a line or two to tell me how you are in health, and as much more about yourselves as thou art free to communicate.

My great desire is that all that is brought upon me may make me more humble, more tender in spirit, more of a little child, more teachable and obedient. Last Seventh-day was a time of sorrow and deep distress to us both. I did make a little attempt to see the poor criminal, and do not know but I went as far in the effort as was required of me; but it was all in vain; they are very strict in their prohibition. It is a most awful consideration that the poor man, to the very last, gave no indication of what we should regard a penitent and broken mind. With all the light and knowledge that are breaking forth upon us, one would think that the day cannot be very remote, in which the nation will see that it is a fearful thing to hurry any poor soul into eternity, laden with all its sins, and deprived of what might be an opportunity for repentance.

CHAPTER XLII.

ANTI-SLAVERY VISITS IN THE KINGDOMS OF HANOVER, SWEDEN, AND DENMARK, AND IN THE CITY OF HAMBURG.

About a month after his return from the Netherlands, William Forster again left home on a more lengthened journey among the continental nations to prosecute the work now before him. Accompanied by John Marsh, of Dorking, he crossed to Calais on the 29th of the Eighth Month, 1849; and, after spending a few days with the Friends at Minden, on his way, proceeded to Hanover. Here they failed in obtaining access to the King, but had an interview with the Crown Prince. Of this William Forster writes to his wife :—

He received us most courteously; the princess was with him. I was readily allowed to read the address; at first I shrank a little from the length, and was not without a wish to omit one or two paragraphs; but as I went along I felt so much the weight and importance of every succeeding sentence, that I could not satisfactorily leave out a single word. The room was made very dark (the Crown Prince being blind), but I read with ease and self-possession, and as much emphasis as I could have desired. There was from first to last a remarkably sweet and serious feeling present with us. When I had concluded, in rather a subdued tone he expressed a word of approbation. He was much disposed for conversation, and spoke apparently with real piety of his loss of sight, and how much, through the goodness of Providence, the loss was made up to him by the happiness of his domestic life.

I had seen his boy at play whilst waiting, and he said how much he desired that he might prove a blessing to them and to the nation. I thought myself warranted in expressing, in a few words, my thankfulness that I could believe he was brought to the enjoyment of the consolations of the Gospel. He very humbly and, as I thought, with much feeling, said that it was so, and that he desired that his faith might increase more and more. He alluded to dear Elizabeth Fry's visit to Hanover. I came away really thankful for the audience. It was to no small extent an encouragement to feel that the freshness of the concern was such that it was as much as I could do to get through some of the sentences; I had such a sense of the magnitude, and weight, and seriousness of the subject.

Fifth-day evening. — We were diligently employed this morning in visiting the ministers of State; we found them all at home but one: it was by no means a light undertaking to me. I am more than ever confirmed in the opinion I have had, in all my labours abroad, that even such as would be considered as well-informed people, know but very little even of the existence of the slave trade, and of the calamity which it inflicts upon the people of Africa.

On leaving Hanover, the travellers proceeded, by way of Hamburg and Lubeck, to Copenhagen. Near that city they had to pass several days in quarantine at Klampenburg, on the shore, on account of the prevalence of the cholera. William Forster writes from Copenhagen:—

It was a lovely evening, the sea a glassy calm, and the prospect beautiful beyond description. A great part of the way, six or seven miles, we had a succession of villas, cottages *ornées*, flower gardens, and trees laden with fruit. We find Copenhagen very gay: there has been a grand fête in honour of the troops returning from the duchies, and a grand review last First-day—flags and garlands hanging about the streets

—illuminations, the soldiers in a state of great excitement. I have made many inquiries for the amount of killed and wounded on both sides, but nobody seems able to give it.

They did not now make much stay in the Danish capital, but went on pretty directly towards Stockholm, by way of Gothenburg. Thence William Forster writes on the 18th of Ninth Month :—

We had a remarkably easy passage—I had a wakeful night—was up early, and found that we were threading our way among the rocks and small islands of the coast of Sweden. Gothenburg has a population of 30,000—a seaport of as much importance as any in the north of Europe; they trade to all parts of the world, and, from the appearance of the bookshops, they must be a reading people.

Now and then, in a few favoured moments, I have a gentle touch of that love which has made me willing to come, and that keeps my faith alive. I very much feel the trial and difficulty of having to make my way among the class of persons to whom I have to present myself; but I hope to hold on, and not to grudge the little that may be in my power to do for the object which of all others lies nearest to my heart.

At Gothenburg they heard that King Oskar was in Norway, and not likely to return to Stockholm within a week or two. They therefore spent some days in the neighbourhood of Gothenburg, and were introduced by the English Consul there to some very interesting families, which made their detention both useful and pleasing. After leaving those parts William Forster writes :—

9th mo. 23rd. Wenersberg.—After I had finished my letter, I went to one of the hospitals to take some Testaments to the patients, and looked in upon a very interesting institution for the literary and industrial education of the boys of

Gothenburg, not exclusively for rich or poor. We went into the workshop; I was delighted with what I saw, and never so much convinced of the value of such a course of education. The students were working in metal,—very happy and thoroughly well-behaved—with all the look of being brimful of talent and intelligence.

25th. Motala.—We left the quay at Gothenburg punctually at five o'clock on First-day morning; in the course of the forenoon we attempted something of a meeting in our own cabin. We had a long series of locks to pass through; our captain gave the passengers two hours for a walk round by the falls; much is said in praise of the scenery, and it is grand and beautiful beyond my powers of description. We have the Postmaster-General on board. From what he tells me I suppose the Lapps (or Laplanders) may be considered as very generally brought to the profession of Christianity; and that the Government is very generously disposed to do what they can for their improvement. He spoke in the warmest terms of attachment of the King and Queen. Go where we may, whether people approve of all his plans or not, everybody loves her. I was on the look out for pine forests; those we passed on our way up the river on First-day were hills of granite, none very high, with pines growing in the insterstices of the rocks.

Fifth-day, one o'clock.—In less than an hour we may hope to reach the quay at Stockholm. I wish to be very thankful that I have been brought thus far in safety and in peace. I have often enjoyed much quietness of mind; and at such times have hardly had a wish to be in any other place. The duties of our errand are beginning to press upon me. I have the comfort of a hope that I shall be helped to accomplish the service I have thought it right to undertake, so as to leave Stockholm with some little evidence of having done my best.

10th mo. 2nd.—Stockholm, as a city, much surpasses my expectation; there is much that is handsome in its appearance. From the general appearance of vegetation, I should hardly have supposed we were so far north; apples upon the trees in

great abundance, pears very fine, and large plums; no signs of frost. The dahlias still green and full of flower.

3rd.—I have been to see the largest hospitals in Stockholm, and their foundling establishment; and spent the evening at Dr. Berg's, physician to the *enfans trouvés*, a man enthusiastically and very humanely devoted to his object. I found Count Rosen a true friend, most willing to serve us, much interested in their temperance society and other good works. I have seen so much of the ill effects of the excessive use of ardent spirits ever since we came into Sweden, that it was a true comfort to me to hear there were many who have given up the use of the drink in the northern provinces; and some gentlemen, formerly in the practice of converting their grain into brandy, have given it up altogether. We had a long way to walk; the evening very fine. I do not know that I ever saw more beautiful moonlight scenery.

I had an interesting and satisfactory interview with the Minister for Norwegian Affairs on Second-day morning, and gave him a copy of the address in English and German; he kindly offered to forward them in his bag to Norway. I took the opportunity of expressing my gratitude for the measure of liberty of conscience granted to our Friends in Norway: he spoke well of them as orderly and peaceable citizens. I mentioned my wish that the same liberty might be conferred on the people on this side of the kingdom, to which he very readily expressed his assent.

The King of Sweden returned to the city a few days after William Forster's arrival; but, finding that his engagements would not allow of a personal interview for some days, he and his companions went up to Upsala, noted for its ancient university, with the view of making arrangements for the distribution of the address. Of this visit he remarks:

C. F. Bergshult, to whom we had a letter of introduction from Count Rosen, introduced us to the archbishop, an aged

man who holds a station of much official influence. I made him acquainted with our object; he expressed his good will towards it. We then called on the Professor of Theology; our conversation was discursive—slave-trade—the Lapps—state of religion in Sweden—works on the evidences of the Christian religion, and illustrative of the Scriptures. There is nothing hardly in Swedish of the character of the popular works on those subjects in England. Then to the University Library—120,000 volumes, well arranged in a new building; every appearance of care and neatness, and of the books being in use; valuable and curious manuscripts, particularly a copy of the Gospels in Gothic, and a very ancient copy of the Edda. Called on a bookseller in the town; he undertakes to receive and to distribute the address among the professors.

On their return to Stockholm W. F. continues :—

On our way down the river we passed two Government establishments, both interesting to me. The first a lunatic asylum for five provinces—200 patients. I was told that they have adopted the modern and more lenient mode of management. The other a sort of agricultural college—50 inmates; one half the sons of country gentlemen who enter at eighteen, the other half young men labourers who enter at twenty-one years of age. They cultivate a farm of 1,000 acres.

The scenery of the lake is really beautiful: almost constant variety; the shores much in a state of nature; here and there a few gentlemen's houses, and some small farms.

An interview was now obtained with King Oskar, at the palace. It took place on the 13th, and William Forster thus describes it :—

The king was quite alone. I presented the address: as our interview was required to be short, I only read the last paragraph. I was a little touched by those words upon the honour due to our Lord. The king seemed to feel it, and

grasped my hand. I said a word or two bearing upon the subject, and of what I had seen and heard of his endeavours to promote the good of his people, and of my desire that it might please the Lord to prosper him in his endeavours. He evidently wished me to understand that he was looking upward for help. He had not a very general knowledge of English. I mentioned our thankfulness for the removal of the restraints under which our friends in Norway had suffered. What he said implied that their conduct had been orderly and satisfactory to the Government. He alluded to the abolition of slavery in their only island in the West Indies. I took the opportunity of expressing our satisfaction at the steps they had taken; their hands being clear, as a nation, they might now remonstrate with those implicated in the guilt of the slave-trade. The way did not appear open for much conversation; yet we came away with the peaceful feeling of having done all that we could.

In the afternoon we went round to the houses of several of the ministers of State, to leave the address.

On the evening of the 15th he held a religious meeting, of which he says:—

According to appointment I had an opportunity with the Moravians, or those whom they consider to belong to their congregation, at the close of a meeting of theirs. I felt much openness of spirit in expressing what I thought I had to communicate. The interpreter very readily gave it, so that the thread of the discourse was but little broken. I was engaged in prayer, and afterwards he gave the subject of it to the people.

The next day he had an interview with the Crown Prince, much to his comfort and relief. He remarks respecting it:—

I felt much at ease; told him that I came to bring him a copy of the address presented to the king; asked permission

to read two or three paragraphs, to which he readily assented. I thought he gave attention and entered into the subject, and said he would do what he could. I then ventured to express my concern for him; and that it was my prayer that God would give him strength to resist the temptations with which he was surrounded in life. I spoke to him on prayer and the fear of the Lord; and upon my saying that I believed he had at times been brought to a sense of that holy fear, he readily and seriously replied that it was so. I was thankful for the opportunity, and told him so. My interest for him, and the sense I had of divine love in my heart, overpowered me; and I was broken into tears in speaking to him of the fear of God.

An audience with the Queen on the following day was equally interesting:—

I endeavoured in a few words to press the subject of the address on her attention. She said, in effect, that she would do what she could; but emphatically added, "It is little that a queen can do." I expressed my belief that she had endeavoured to give her children a Christian education. She took my hand with much feeling, and her countenance betrayed no slight emotion. On withdrawing, I said I believed I should never lose the interest I felt in all that related to the good of this country. She said she believed they were helped by the good wishes of their friends. I ventured to add, that I believed I should often remember her in my prayers.

In reference to the general distribution of the address, William Forster adds:—

Since our interview with the king I believe we have lost no opportunity of putting the address into circulation in Stockholm, among those high in office, and among people who, from their standing in life, might be regarded as men of influence. A large supply is gone to Gothenburg; a packet to Upsala, to the care of a member of the University, who has

undertaken to present it to the professors, and to the first class of students,—about 150. We are sending a supply to the governor of each of the twenty-one provinces in Sweden, and to each of the bishops of the Lutheran church in Sweden. A packet goes in course to the island of Gothland.

Having accomplished the object of their mission at the Swedish capital, the travellers took the overland route back to Copenhagen. They left Stockholm on the 19th of Tenth Month, and had a tedious journey of eight days with post-horses across the country to Lund. The road in some places was very heavy, and they had to traverse some hills, but the scenery was beautiful, especially on the shore of the Wetter lake. They saw "some well cultivated land, apparently divided into large farms, with good farm buildings; the bottom lands rich and in good order —timber growing freely." The impression left on William Forster's mind respecting the condition of the labouring class, appears not to have been unfavourable.

At Lund he writes on the 29th :—

A full day; much interesting intercourse. Soon after breakfast we went to call on P. Fjellsted; found the family open-hearted and pious people. He had been a missionary, in connexion with the Church Missionary Society, in India and Smyrna. Since his return from the East, he has been living at Basle, and for the last three years in this place, editing various religious periodicals. Went with Baron —— to visit the institution for young criminals, and boys convicted of vagabondage; spent some time in going over the premises, and making many inquiries into the results and working of the concern. Fjellsted went with me to call on the bishop, an old man infirm and unwell: he expressed himself warmly on our object: then to Thomunder, very interesting and satisfactory. To the establishment for training schoolmasters;

spent a little time with thirty or forty young men (some not very young). F. interpreted a few sentences, I wished to say; perhaps they might be considered in the character of ministry. Then to the University Library. To tea at F.'s—an interesting evening: some religious communication. Sent a Testament to each of the fifteen boys at the Ruby Institution.

He next continues his remarks at Helsinborg:—

10th mo. 30th.—Our return to Copenhagen is in many respects formidable to me. I earnestly desire to be kept retired in mind, and inwardly watchful to the secret checks and pointings of the Spirit of Truth, so far as in great mercy they may be granted me. The prospect of parting with A. M. * is much of a trial to me.

31st.—Soon after reading this morning we held our meeting; and I think well that we did so. I am sensible—deeply so—of omissions, infirmities, and unwatchfulness; and can only ask to be forgiven my shortcomings, and all that I have said and done amiss. The prospect of being left to make my way in Denmark, without any knowledge of Danish or German, brings me very low. It may be that I shall not find much laid on me.

11th mo. 1st.—A few moments of peace, hope, and humble thanksgiving, were granted me just before leaving our hotel, and were a blessed end to my long and toilsome travels (I do not use the words in a murmuring mind) in Sweden. This was so much the more precious to me, as I had felt a little disappointed and cast down by the apparent flatness of our visit at Helsinborg. A pleasant and good passage of half an hour to Elsineur. Our journey on the diligence to Copenhagen was not an unpleasant one, much of the way within sight of the Sound; good farm land; the homesteads presented the appearance of comfort, and in some places I thought the land well cultivated.

* A young friend from Dusseldorf, who had joined him as companion and interpreter.

On their return to Copenhagen they were detained several days before an opportunity could be obtained to see the King. During this interval W. F. writes:—

The day before yesterday I went with Dr. Hanover to their large institution for the sick, the infirm, and aged,—350 inmates; the General Hospital,—400 inmates; the poor-house,—a much larger number; and then to the Military Hospital. I did not go into each ward, far from it; but I saw many people reading, young and old, and but one Bible. On inquiry, I found the institution makes no provision of the kind for its inmates. I immediately thought of furnishing the first two with a Bible and two Testaments for each ward. I am informed that the privilege of printing Bibles and Testaments is a monopoly belonging to the Weisenhaus, an institution for the education of poor boys; and that the Bible Society have to buy them at booksellers' price.

The Bible Society here is all but defunct: they have a capital, the interest of which they profess to spend; no annual subscription, I am told, and next to no committee. I proposed a conference with a few of the committee, on colportage; but hardly anybody is to be found who could be asked to meet on the occasion. I should have offered to pay wages of two colporters for six months each, as an experiment, but I see no way of bringing it about. Alas, for the Protestantism of Denmark.*

After the interview with the King of Denmark, he continues:—

11th mo. 9th.—Oppressed with thought and care in reference to that which was immediately before me. A visit from the chaplain of the two wards, in company with C. F. They

* It is gratifying to notice, in the later reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the great revival of zeal, and energetic effort to promote the circulation of the Scriptures, which have since taken place in Denmark.

expressed their wish to obtain the supply of Bibles and Testaments which I had thought of giving to the hospitals; which has brought me to the conclusion of purchasing for them seventy-five Testaments and fifteen Bibles; the total cost exactly ten pounds.

Went to the palace of Christianborg. We had to wait about half-an-hour, when we were ushered into the audience chamber. The king gave me a courteous reception, and immediately put out his hand to receive the address. I explained the object of it, and expressed my satisfaction at the Government of Denmark having adopted measures for the emancipation of the slaves in their West Indian possessions, and of the information I had received of the well-working of that measure; to which the King, through his interpreter, responded. Upon my adverting to the continuance of the African slave-trade, and its barbarities, he said he should be glad to unite with other nations for its complete extinction.

I directed his attention to the concluding paragraph of the address in Danish, which he read, and said he thanked us for our good wishes. I believe I said and did all that the occasion required. It was some encouragement to me to have my mind afresh imbued with the weight and importance of the object, of which I do confess myself to be a most feeble and unworthy advocate. Much as has been said of the little that was to be expected from this interview, something possibly has been gained.

John Marsh went with me to call upon the Countess of Holstein, as I wished to be informed of the present state of an institution established upon their estate on this island, by her husband. We conversed upon a variety of subjects: she told me of much that is going forward among the ladies of Copenhagen for the good of the poor. I did not fail to give her an address; which elicited observations by which I was confirmed in the opinion that the very existence of a trade in slaves from Africa is but little known among those in this country who are most interested in the welfare of their fellow men. I said a few words under some serious feeling, and they appeared to find place with the Countess.

13th.—Went to the palace of the Queen Dowager. I endeavoured to draw her attention to the condition of Africa, and I hope it may not have been all in vain.

17th.—I felt so little real relief of mind from my interview with the Queen that I was glad to lay hold of that which was brought upon me, and, under the feeling of it, to try and put a few sentences together. The letter is as follows:—

To CAROLINE AMELIA, QUEEN DOWAGER OF DENMARK.

I wish to be allowed very gratefully to acknowledge the kindness and condescension with which thou wast pleased to grant me an opportunity to offer thee a copy of the address from the religious Society of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland, to the sovereigns of Europe, &c., on the cruelty and wickedness of the African slave-trade, and on the injustice and oppression of negro slavery. I am rejoiced to find that the grievous enormities, and the many sufferings, inflicted by this terrible scourge on the natives of Africa, have already obtained thy consideration, and that they have a place in thy sympathies. Permit me to solicit the continuance of thy attention to this great subject, and humbly to ask thee to exert the influence of thy exalted station, for awakening the same sympathy in the hearts of others.

I reverently bless the name of the Lord, that I can believe, in the riches of his grace, He has brought thee to the knowledge and to the love of our Saviour; and, although a stranger and from a foreign land, I shall not be considered as taking too much upon me in expressing my fervent desire that our merciful Father in heaven may grant thee a yet larger enjoyment in the consolations of the Gospel of Christ; that day by day, under the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, his gracious promises may strengthen thy faith and hope; that He may grant thee a sense of his presence in thy moments of retirement from the world; and that, for the sake of his dear Son who died for us, He may listen to thy prayers for his help and protection,—that thou mayst be kept in the fear of the Lord to the end of thy life; and that He may

help thee to serve Him in all things in which He may be pleased to call for thy obedience. And that when the infirmities of nature may increase upon thee, that which was the blessed experience of the royal psalmist may be thy enjoyment: "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

WILLIAM FORSTER, *from Norwich, England.*

Copenhagen, 15th of Eleventh Month, 1849.

With this letter to the Queen Dowager, which, it was afterwards ascertained, came into her hands, William Forster's more prominent labours in Copenhagen appear to have closed. He and his companion left the city on the 17th on their way to Hamburg. He thus describes the country and the occurrences of the journey:—

It was an enclosed country, and, had we been dropped down from a balloon, there was hardly anything that would have led me to imagine we were not in England.

On our way out of the town we came by the exercising ground of the military, a very large field, in which they seemed to be training the men to actual warfare. I saw them in almost every imaginable attitude, detached and in small companies; as if they were ready to pick off the stragglers of an army one by one. Some of the men were lying down with their muskets pointed, others were kneeling, some lurking behind a fence, and others stealing gently along in the high road, peeping through the hedges.—Oh! it was to me a very awful scene, and I do not wish to forget it.

At Christiansfeld, a Moravian establishment, there was in the evening a large gathering, and all was very quiet. First I read the minute of our Yearly Meeting, then the address, and then I spoke. I ventured to make an appointment with the widows for the next morning. The meeting was, according to my apprehension, a solid religious opportunity; and I cannot but believe there were some well-instructed, and of good experience in that which is the very life of godliness.

We made a visit to the temporary military hospital, where we saw some fine young men, most grievously wounded at the battle of Kolding. They had kept their beds since the Seventh Month, and were very far from being fully recovered.

We made but one visit at Sleswig, but that was well worth remembering, to a good Christian old man, whom I understood to be a bishop retired from active service. He and his daughters were very friendly, and kindly undertook to give circulation to the address.

On a retrospect of our journey from Copenhagen, I incline to think we took the right course; and that it was well for me to have seen and felt as much as I did of the hostility that prevails between the Danes and the Holsteiners; and of the war, and the result of the war, by which that fine country to so large an extent has been converted into a battle-field. Oh! what I would not go through, if I could do anything to prevent a recurrence of the scenes which have been depicted to us.*

Arrived at Hamburg, he writes to his wife on the 1st of the Twelfth Month:—

The weather has been intensely cold; and it was as much as I could do to bear the exertion of going from house to house; and many of those to whom we presented ourselves living upstairs, some on the second story, very much increased the labour of the day's work. But as I went along, I met with enough to satisfy me that it was the right course of action, and that helped me on until the day's work was done. I have found more of an understanding of our concern among the merchants and people in authority in this city than in any other place we have visited. The importation of Brazilian produce constitutes a very large part of the trade of Hamburg; and I find many willing to admit that to supply them with sugar and coffee does much towards keeping up the market for slaves in South America; and that to the supply

* See an interesting account of subsequent events arising out of the question between "Denmark and the Duchies," in the valuable "Memoirs of Joseph Sturge," by Henry Richard, chap. xxi.

of that market the miseries of Africa are mainly to be attributed.

In the course of our first day's work I was much interested by the account a gentleman (a merchant and senator of Hamburg) gave me of a colony they are about to form in Brazil, upon land on the river to the south of Rio, which had come to the Prince of Joinville, as his wife's marriage portion; and which he had purchased of the prince, and made over to a company in Hamburg. He says it is a district adapted to the growth of sugar and other tropical produce; and that the utter exclusion of slavery forms a prominent feature in the constitution they have formed for its government.

For two or three days I was much tossed in mind, not knowing whether I might not be set at liberty to return. The thoughts of home and coming back to thee, and the rest and warmth, and retirement of home, did for a time almost overpower me, and seem to disqualify for the duties of the day. At length I was brought—I hope I do not use too strong a term—to the conclusion that if it were the wish of Friends I should now retire, I could submit to this decision; but that it must be their doing, and not mine. Lightly as I may sometimes estimate my labours, I dare not at present take upon myself the responsibility of proposing to return. The discouragements, and perplexity of these few days were of much worth to me. And the distress of mind I have passed through has been more than compensated to me by the sense to which it has brought me, that whether all I go through be for my own humiliation or the good of others, it is that which I cannot forego without bringing myself under condemnation. This helps me to contentment under my many privations, and it does something towards the fortifying of my mind against the trials of the day.

As I came along through the hostile parties in Denmark and Holstein, I had such a sense of the condition to which war has reduced that fine country, and such a feeling of the bitterness and hatred it has engendered between the Danes and the people of the Duchies—I saw so much of the preparation for war in every place, and heard so much, from both

sides, of the apprehension of a speedy renewal of hostilities—that I did not know whether there might not be some little matter for me to do on the occasion.

I visited the military hospital at Copenhagen, and was at two different times in a small military hospital at Christiansfeld. I believe it was well for me that I went there, and that I could feel what I did in sympathy with the poor wounded and maimed patients, that I might be brought to a deeper sense than ever I had before of the evils and horrors of war. I have made many inquiries into the loss of life on both sides; but hardly anybody seemed willing to tell even what they might suppose to be the amount. I am inclined to the opinion that it was very little short of 5,000: the last estimate I heard was 2,000 on the side of the Danes, and 2,000 on the side of the Holsteiners.

I have felt restrained from entering into the points at issue between the two parties. Much as I sometimes hear, I am entirely without an opinion as to the right or wrong of the case on either side. There are so many burning with revenge, and wrought up to desperation on both sides, that if they begin to fight again, whether it be for a longer or a shorter time, it will be a most bloody conflict. Sober, well-minded people are earnest to have the case settled by mediation; and why should not the sword be stayed? Like all civil war, it is most affecting to hear of the degree to which it breaks in upon the relations of social life. Amelia Van Rosen, one of Queen Caroline's maids of honour, told me that she had four brothers in the army, two fighting against the other two.

12th mo. 3rd.—Last evening we had a meeting in the vestry-room of the British Reformed Church, for the English people of Hamburg. It cost me much thought and exercise of mind; and we had to give up much time in making arrangements for it. It was far from a small meeting; a quiet, settled, good time. I was glad to be allowed once more to handle the word of life and truth, and to preach Christ to those who had an ear to hear it. We intend starting for Berlin to-morrow morning.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ANTI-SLAVERY VISITS IN PRUSSIA, SAXONY, AUSTRIA, BOHEMIA, BAVARIA, WURTEMBERG, BADEN, SWITZERLAND, ITALY, AND FRANCE.

FROM Hamburg, as intimated in the last page, William Forster proceeded to Berlin. There his kind companion John Marsh left him, and returned to England; and his brother Josiah Forster, with Cornelius Hanbury, took his place. The latter remained with them only as far as Halle; but the former continued with his brother nearly three months. From his pen the following narrative of their proceedings during that time is chiefly derived. In reference to their visit in Berlin, he remarks:—

We were detained in this city until the 21st, for the purpose of efficiently carrying out the circulation of the address on slavery. On the 10th, we were allowed an interview with the King of Prussia at his palace at Potsdam. After a little allusion on the part of the king to his visit in London, my brother asked permission to read the address; this was readily granted. He heard it attentively and kindly. I thought the last paragraph more particularly touched his feelings. He said, "It was beautiful—very beautiful," and asked what Prussia could do. I said we were aware it was a country not involved in the slave-trade; but we wished a moral influence to be used by one Power upon another in Europe; and referred more particularly to Spain. He seemed to feel some force in the argument; spoke of Liberia, and so did we, favourably, in reply. I tried to convey the idea of tens

of thousands of helpless, unoffending Africans transported to the Western world. He asked what we thought of the cruiser system. It was remarked that our principles as a religious Society did not allow us to approve of it; and we doubted whether it had effected or was effecting that for which it was designed. My dear brother boldly took the opportunity to tell him that he came through Sleswig and Holstein, where he had seen much of the dreadful evils of war, the wounded in the hospitals, &c., asking him to do what he could to effect peace in the kingdom of Denmark. He said he was trying to do what he could, and should be strengthened in it by what had been said.

In the course of our tarriance in Berlin, we called on Neander, the author of the ecclesiastical history, and other works. On this interview my brother writes:—"A very agreeable and interesting visit; we were admitted into his study, a very characteristic exhibition of a student's life in Germany. He was very loving; and I think there was evidence of true Christian humility. His conversation was upon a variety of subjects—bearing arms, oaths, the love that was among the early believers, and the freedom which they allowed one to the other in the exercise of their respective spiritual gifts. He spoke in strong terms of his belief in the gift of the discerning of spirits as existing in the early church, —of George Fox; he had read his Journal, and spoke in high terms of his spiritual views. He had also read John Woolman's life, and was interested in the abolition of the slave-trade, &c. Before we came away our communication was more decidedly serious, in which he strongly denounced all confidence in himself; and on my mentioning those words of the disciples, "Evermore give us this bread," he feelingly responded to it; and in very emphatic words said it was his desire to partake of it more and more. He parted from us very affectionately. He died not long after.*

During our stay in this city, way was kindly made for three

* It was only a year before his death that he wrote those touching words at the conclusion of his dedication to his friend Dr. Julius Müller of the second edition of his Tertullian:—"Like you, I well know that

religious meetings; with the Moravians in their chapel, and with the Baptists at the mission-house. My dear brother, at whose request they were held—none of them large—had some religious service in each. At the first about 100 men, women, and children, were assembled. He addressed them, and spoke of the comforts of the religion of Christ, of which he believed many there were true partakers; setting forth the blessings and the consolations which the followers of the Lord Jesus enjoy, and the spiritual, practical nature of true religion; encouraging to faithfulness unto the end, amid all the trials and temptations of life, and looking to the blessed and certain hope beyond the grave; appealing to the young on what they had felt, and adverting to the temptations and sorrows to which they are exposed. The heart was warmed with Christian

no man is worthy of celebrity and veneration; that in all we know or do, we are, and must ever be, beggars and sinners."

Truly did one of his former pupils say of him: "Neander, the father of modern church history—a child in spirit, a man in intellect, a giant in learning, and a saint in piety—led back the study of history from the dry heath of Rationalism to the fresh fountain of the divine life in Christ and his people, and made it a grand source of edification for readers of every confession and denomination."—"Neander still remains, on the whole, beyond doubt the greatest church historian thus far of the nineteenth century. Great, too, especially in this, that he never suffered his renown to obscure at all his sense of the sinfulness and weakness of every human work in this world. With all his comprehensive knowledge, he justly regarded himself as, among many others, merely a forerunner of a new creative epoch of ever-young Christianity; and towards that time he gladly stretched his vision, with the prophetic gaze of faith and hope, from amidst the errors and confusion around him. 'We stand,' he said, 'on the line between an old world and a new, about to be called into being by the ever-fresh energy of the Gospel. For a fourth time an epoch in the life of our race is in preparation by means of Christianity. We, therefore, can furnish *in every respect but pioneer work*, for the period of the new creation, when life and science shall be regenerated, and the wonderful works of God be proclaimed with new tongues of fire.'"—See Dr. Schaff's "History of the Apostolic and of the Christian Church."

It was no wonder that, though not agreeing with him in all his opinions, between such a man and the subject of this memoir there should be many points of contact and of Christian fellowship.

love and sympathy, and there was a capacity granted to give utterance to the feeling. A calm solemnity prevailed after he sat down, and we separated in much love.

Our time was much employed in calling on the several ministers of State with copies of the address, most of whom we saw, and were kindly received by them. Arrangements were also made to forward the same to the members of the two Houses of Parliament, to the professors of the Universities, to the governors of the provinces, and to the bishops and other ecclesiastical officers.

On leaving Berlin we proceeded to Dresden, where a satisfactory opportunity was granted to present the address to the King of Saxony. Leipsic and Halle were visited. At the latter place we spent an hour very agreeably with Professor Tholuck and his amiable wife, both of whom speak English. He much confirmed the account we had heard of the present state of religion in Germany. We talked of the prevalence of infidelity in that land, and of Puseyism in England. Tholuck retains a lively recollection of dear William Allen, and freely admitted the soundness in the Christian faith of the early Friends, and of Friends of this day. We conversed on the evidences of Christianity, on natural theology, &c. Tholuck spoke highly of Neander, and his Christian submission to his present trial—the loss of his sight. We went to the rector of the university, who kindly agreed to distribute the address to the professors and students, about 700. The same course of distribution was pursued in Saxony as at Berlin; and we arrived at Breslau, in Silesia, on the 2nd of the First Month, 1850, where a similar course was pursued.

We reached Vienna on the 5th, and were detained there until the 24th. The letter kindly furnished to my brother by Lord Palmerston, addressed to the ambassadors of the several courts of Europe, was, I believe, very useful here, as it had before been. On the 14th a personal interview with the Emperor of Austria was granted. My brother writes of this visit:—"Our interview was, I think, all we had any right to expect. We had prepared a few sentences in French, which my brother read to him. He evidently gave attention to it:

he said he would read the address; and in reference to the object of it he told us he would do what he could. We found him standing alone in the middle of a very large room. He is young, not yet twenty years of age, and looking youthful for his years; but, young as he is, there is a sense of imperial dignity in his manners, as if he knew that he was reigning over one of the largest monarchies in Europe." I read in German the closing paragraph of the address, which he received agreeably, and we withdrew. The following is a copy of the few lines that were presented:—

"The undersigned ask leave of the Emperor of Austria to express their gratitude for being allowed the liberty of personally presenting the address of the Religious Society of Friends, in Great Britain and Ireland, on the cruelty and sin of the African slave-trade, and on the oppression of negro slavery.

They recommend the case, in its full extent, to the reflection and sympathy of the Emperor; and they take the liberty to entreat him, when the opportunity shall present, to make use of his exalted position to hasten the termination of these sins—sins which have produced indescribable calamities to the people of Africa, and, as a consequence thereof, continued misery in the Western world."

After this audience, personal interviews were obtained with the Ministers of the Interior, of Commerce, and of the other departments of the government; also with the Archbishop of Vienna. The address was presented to them; and we were kindly and respectfully received. We forwarded, in some instances, packets of the address, to be transmitted to those in their departments, and under their superintendence, both in the city and in different parts of the empire. We also called at the houses of many of the nobility, and either presented the address to them in person, or left it at their dwellings.

In the early part of our visit here, the city being still under military authority, in consequence of the recent outbreaks in the empire, my dear brother wrote:—"I now feel myself much at home in Vienna; I find objects of interest to

which I can satisfactorily devote myself, and am very desirous of turning the opportunity to the best account. If, as I go along, I can see a little of what is done for the poor, the diseased, and the infirm, and for the moral, religious, and industrial training of their destitute children, and the reclaiming of those who in early life have been betrayed into a course of crime, it is all I can expect to accomplish."

For two or three days my brother was seriously ill from an attack of fever. He was kindly attended by a skilful physician, Dr. Bender, with whom we became unexpectedly acquainted; and who, though pressed to do so, would not receive any remuneration. The winter was extremely cold in Austria; they had not for many years had such a frost, nor so much snow in Vienna as fell whilst we were there.

A short time before quitting the city my brother writes:— "We are now upon the point of leaving Vienna. I have peace in our departure, and peace and trust in looking forwards. I am sure we ought to be very thankful in considering how the way has been made for us from day to day, and the kindness we have met with from those high in authority. Our interview with the Emperor was, I think, all that we had any right to expect; to be sure he said but little, and we did not attempt to say much. He said he would read the address; and in reference to the object he would do what he could.

The more we saw of the ministers of the Crown, and the more we heard of their proceedings, from people who seemed to understand what they were talking about, the more reason we had to be satisfied that they are true to the principles which form the basis of their revolution, and that they are honestly endeavouring to fulfil the promises they gave to the people; but they have a difficult task, and they feel it so. Considering the diversity that exists in their large population, as to language, habits, degrees of civilization, &c., one hardly knows how they will be able to conduct the concerns of a general legislative assembly elected upon the principle of universal suffrage.

They are carrying out measures for improving the condition

of the peasantry,—we hear of it from different quarters,—which must materially affect the circumstances of the aristocracy; and as they are bent upon improving their system of education, with all the deduction we ought to make for the failure of the best intentions, one cannot but think that there is good ground for hope that, ultimately, the people will be placed in such circumstances that it will be their own fault if they do not become as happy a peasantry as any in Europe."

We came from Vienna to Prague, and, after occupying a few days in giving circulation to the address, proceeded to Munich in Bavaria, which city we reached after a winterly journey of two nights and two days, on the evening of the 1st of the Second Month; and on the following Second-day, through the kind intervention of the British Ambassador in this city, an interview with the King of Bavaria was obtained. My brother writes to his son:—

"The king received us alone in a small room. Upon my asking permission, he very readily allowed me to read a few paragraphs of the address, to which I thought he gave his mind. He assented to the truth of what we had brought before him, conversed on the subject very freely—said he would do what he could—but what had we to suggest? This is the question often put as we go along. As on other occasions, we told him we did not presume to dictate to the governments of other countries, or to tell them their duty; but simply to bring the matter before them, and ask them to do what was in their power in aid of the great object. After a few words on the general state of affairs in Bavaria, we withdrew, well satisfied with our interview. We have seen all the six ministers of State; they were polite, respectful, and attentive to what we wished to say.

We went to Professor Schubert's: he is a remarkably fine old man; he could not speak English, but it required no great degree of penetration to perceive that he is a humble-minded, well-established Christian: his countenance beams with tenderness and intelligence, and the most enlarged philanthropy. He travelled a few years ago in Palestine and Egypt, and is much interested in Africa." In reference to

the future he adds: "I have thought it most to my peace not to attempt to form much of a plan for the accomplishment of what may appear to be the duties of the present service. I have no prospect of going further into Italy than Turin and Florence. When I may think myself clear of those parts, I hope I shall be favoured to see whether it is really laid upon me to go into Spain. This part of my original prospect is often before me. I have felt so strongly drawn to that country in what I believe to be the love of Christ, that if no one were to offer to go with me, I trust I should not hesitate to go alone. I have nothing like the feeling that I am going there to do any great thing, and that much will ever result from it. Let it cost me whatever it may, if, in the mercy and love of Him who is the Father of us all, I may be helped, in ever so much feebleness and brokenness, to plead for those who cannot plead for themselves, it will be enough—all that I can ask or desire. I think it a favour to be acknowledged with the utmost thankfulness, that from one time to another as I go along, and especially when I have to appear before those in authority, I continue to feel the concern to revive in all its original freshness; and that sympathies with those subject to the horrors and cruelties of the slave-trade do not subside. I do not attempt to keep myself up to the point by any artificial excitement, neither do I turn from any recent information, nor from any facts: there are but few."

We proceeded by way of Augsburg to Stuttgard, and afterwards to Carlsruhe. In these cities, opportunities were granted to present the address to the King of Wurtemberg and to the Grand Duke of Baden, and to press the subject upon their attention. Circulation was also given to the paper, as on former occasions, among those of influence.

From the dominions of the Grand Duke of Baden, the two brothers proceeded to Strasburg. There, closely as they had been united in the service of Christ, and of their fellow men of all shades of colour, they separated. Josiah Forster returned home, and his place was supplied by Robert Alsop and Francis Fry.

At Strasburg William Forster found waiting him a letter from Tholuck, whom they had l visited at Halle. After referring to some matters of a private nature, and to the benev exertions of "his lady" among the sick poor, Tholuck thus continues:—

I have more than once, dear friend, felt the presen God in the company of some of your brethren: I have done so in your company. I am attached to you in bonds of Christian friendship. I often repeat: Religi the simplest thing in the world, needing the least of appar This is what the Society of Friends teaches us:—that is, t who are spiritual members: for alas! some make morals philanthropy all, and leave out of sight, that the indwel principle of the love of Christ is the main thing.

Have you seen Schubert in Munich?* He is the man can completely feel with you, and understand you: his reli is all simplicity. In Strasburg there is also a man of a sim class, though a little more linked to forms: but one of most lovely children of God—pastor Härter.

I shall rejoice to hear from you further, chiefly how have found Prof. Bergnes, to whom you will most kin remember me, and tell him that I desire a reply to my l sent him from Geneva.

Almighty God be ever near to you, and to your

Faithful friend,

AUGUSTUS THOLUCK

Halle, Feb. 16th, 1850.

In the further carrying out of this arduous und taking, William Forster and his companions, Rob Alsop and Francis Fry, passed on into Switzerlar At Basle, he says, "We had a meeting in the eveni at the mission-house: it cost me something, and hope no harm was done." At Berne, besides maki use, in the distribution of the address, of the list

* See page 282.

the professors of the University, and of the members of the Chambers, they "made up packets for the twenty-two cantons."

They now paid an interesting visit at Geneva, in furtherance of the object of their journey. Alluding to a trying affection of one of his eyes, which continued to trouble him for some time afterwards, he says, in writing home, on the 9th of Third Month:—

I cannot conceal from myself that it is an indication not to be mistaken, and that there may be a chastening in store for me, to which it may be hard to submit myself; but I hope to be patient under it. I wish to try for a little reunion, to-day, of a few people to whom I could say a word or two on the African slave-trade." (On this meeting he adds afterwards:) "Our meeting last evening turned out well. There was a large attendance. Several of our friends spoke, and much to the purpose. Dr. Lambert, Tronchin, Cordes, and Arbuthnot; everybody seemed interested."

3rd mo. 13th.—O that you could all see Mont Blanc, as it is now to be seen out of my window! so very clear and fine. Last evening it was beautiful beyond description, as I watched the dying away of the sunshine long after the sun had set upon the lower mountains; such a roseate hue as can scarce be conceived by those who have not seen it. I hardly know which to admire most, the grandeur and majesty of the high mountain, or the beautiful craggy *Aiguilles*. To see it as I have seen it, I take to be one of the finest sights in this lower world.

From Switzerland the travellers crossed the mountains into Italy, and on the 2nd of the Fourth Month, William Forster writes from Milan to his wife:—

Some little revival of that love in which I was first brought to give myself up to the service was granted in the hour of

need: and I was not only strengthened to pursue what I believed to be the path appointed, but as we came along through the day, and especially on our arrival and settling here, I have found peace and rest. I am brought more and more to see that I have nothing to look to, but doing what I may believe to be the duty of the day: and humbly to trust that I shall be supported and protected to the end, wherever and whensoever I may find an end to the service.

Again, on the 28th of the month, to his son:—

I never remember a time in which I more thoroughly felt the value of every hour, nor in which I was more earnest in desire to be given up to what I believed to be the duty of the day. I look back with thanksgiving and admiration on the path I have trod since I came into Italy: we have met with no obstruction, and been shielded from harm on every hand. Our appeal has met with as hearty a response as we could have looked for: and wherever it has led to conversation, it has been asked, What can we do? I have generally thought it best to put it home to the consciences of such as appeared well disposed to the object to consider what there may be in their power to do. At Turin we saw the King of Sardinia, and all the Ministers of State but one: at Milan Prince Schwartzenburg, the head of the present military government for that part of Lombardy; afterwards, at Verona, Marshal Radetsky; and at Venice General ——: the whole country being still in a state of siege, they are invested by the Austrian Government with supreme authority. At Venice, Padua, Verona, Milan, and Turin, I did not spare myself, night or day; and by one means or other succeeded in getting the subject brought before the *noblesse*, principal families, the *bourgeoisie*, professors, ecclesiastics, and advocates. At Venice I applied for an audience with the Duke of Bordeaux. The duke behaved like a gentleman, set us perfectly at ease, and soon said enough to convince me that, like most of the people we have seen, he was in great ignorance as to the actual extent of the evil, and of those by whom the slave-trade is carried on. We

made acquaintance with Lady Sellon at Venice; she invited us to her *soiree*. I should have been glad to have said a word or two on the love of our Saviour, and of that pardon and reconciliation which is offered us through his mediation. The sense of this brought me to tears. But I did not find it to be laid upon me; and, of course, I bore my burden. It is when I get into the way of such people that I feel, more perhaps than at any other times, the reality of the love of the Gospel. I felt much for old Radetsky.

At Genoa three hundred copies of the address were disposed of in the same manner; and, having reached Oneglia, William Forster writes to his brother Josiah Forster:—

The prospect of an increased deficiency of sight, and that it may end in total blindness [which was never realized], sometimes brings me into heaviness, and in moments of greatest infirmity excites some fearful apprehensions. I feel it especially as it relates to some objects I had in prospect; but on the whole I am kept in a submissive and unmurmuring mind; and if I live to be laid upon the shelf, helpless and useless, I am not without a hope that that which has pressed upon me will be taken away, and that I shall, through some means or another, be provided with as much alleviation as will be good for me.

I shall, I believe, be rejoiced to hear that Friends are favoured with a good, solid, harmonious Yearly Meeting, without giving themselves up to despondency, or being overmuch cast down by the decrease of our numbers; and the little we can see of the prospect of much succession.

After having entered France, he continues his narrative:—

5th mo. 24th. Marseilles.—We arrived early in the afternoon of yesterday. At one time I pleased myself with thinking that we might have gone as far as Nismes; but upon

a little reflection last evening, and endeavouring to give myse up to the concern of the Yearly Meeting, which I trust is living and deep-rooted concern in our little church, a burde laid upon it in the wisdom and tender compassion of ou Lord, I came to the conclusion that it might be in the wa of our duty to see what opening there was for the distri bution of the address in Marseilles. Between three and fou hundred copies were distributed to the merchants, lawyer and other influential persons; and I am as well satisfied wit our little labours there as at any place we have visited.

With reference to the state of religion in Italy, h adds:—

Through all, the work is going forward; the light of th blessed Gospel has already broken forth; and there ar awakened, quickened souls, seeking the way of life and sa vation. I heard of much that interested and comforted m in Tuscany; but I had great reason to believe I was right in not going after them. Had I not attended to the restrain that I thought was laid upon me, I believe I should hav greatly endangered the object in which I am engaged. I those who are brought to the Truth stand faithful to thei Lord, we must expect that they will have much to suffer I am most of all afraid lest the meddlesome hand of ma should mar the work that has been begun.

From Marseilles William Forster went forward t Nismes, and visited nearly all the little companie professing with Friends in Languedoc; after whicl he proceeded to Privas, on his way to Paris, whils his companions returned home. From Privas h writes to his brother Josiah Forster:—

9th. First-day.—I have got scent of the people I wa seeking after, and hope to see something of them in th course of the day. We came by rail on Sixth-day morning t Alais, and lodged at St. Ambroix. I was not equal to muc

exertion, but yet used some efforts to put myself in communication with the Protestants of that place, though without success. Yesterday morning we were *en route à bonne heure;* came by Joyeuse to Aubenais and over the mountains to Privas.

I went at two o'clock to a little reunion of serious religious people, held at the house of a widow. I should suppose there might be between twenty and thirty *Protestants nés*, such as appeared to be labouring people. They gave the time up very much to me, and seemed willing to *rester en silence* more than I could have expected. I did my best in French—I dare say it was bad enough. I should suppose that they are an awakened, tender, sober-minded, seeking people.

In the afternoon there was a grand procession in the town of the *Fête de Dieu;* everything very gaudy, and as much apart from simple Christianity as it well could be. The host under a canopy of crimson velvet, richly gilt; the people with their censers throwing about their incense; the streets lined with white linen and flowers. There was much the same thing going on at Nismes. Everybody speaks of the Romish Church as being in the ascendant, much more so than under Louis Philippe.

Again, from Lyons, on the 13th:—

I thought the intervals of silence in our meeting at Annonay were solemn; and they were not very short. If we take many of the dear people in this country as they are, instead of being out of humour with them that they are not more to the mark at which we profess to aim, we cannot but rejoice and be thankful for the measure to which they are brought, and that so much of the spiritual mind can be discerned at work within them.

At Auxerre he held another meeting, respecting which he remarks:—

The meeting was far from being a very small company. In much simplicity and faithfulness I endeavoured to deliver

what I thought was laid upon me. I told Rangel, the interpreter, that if I should feel myself engaged to offer prayer in the meeting, I did not wish to have it interpreted. It was instructive and very comforting to me to hear him say that he should not be willing to undertake that part of the service, as he thought it almost impossible to give the spirit, the unction, of the prayer, though he might give the words. It was so; and, in what I thought was a good feeling of solemnity, he afterwards gave it very faithfully.

On his arrival at Paris, when, it will be recollected, Napoleon was at the head of the French Republic, he was met by his brother Josiah Forster, and they resumed the remaining part of the work together. W. F. says in reference to it:—

We had an audience with the President yesterday: we were well received. He speaks English with great facility, allowed me to read as much of the address as I wished, conversed upon the subject with good sense and good feeling, and did not seem at all disposed to hurry us away. We have been at the offices of three of the ministers to-day, and shall probably call on the others to-morrow morning. We have it also in contemplation to forward a copy of the address to the members of the Chamber. We think we shall then be at liberty to take our departure.

In the course of this journey William Forster had received a letter from Catherine Gurney, which, from its intrinsic value, and characteristic reference to herself, may perhaps not unsuitably find a place here.

CATHERINE GURNEY TO WILLIAM FORSTER.

Lowestoft, *17th January, 1850.*

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I am much interested by thy affectionate message, and glad to receive it, and to hear such

good tidings of thy proceedings. A blessing does indeed seem to be richly bestowed on thy "work of faith and labour of love." I am not inclined to say many words about myself. There is nothing so happy in cases of protracted infirmity, as quiet submission—lying prostrate under the hand of the Lord, who chastens us "for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." May this all-important end be perfected in me! This is my prayer, and, as far as it depends upon myself, my endeavour day by day. Remember me for good, dear William, in thy hours of close communion, in which thy absent friends are brought before thee; and recollect that I desire to abide continually under the shadow of the Almighty, at the foot of the cross. This is my resting-place, under every conflict of bodily suffering, or nervous agitation of spirit, to which I am subject, and which is a leading feature in my complaint, and very trying to my nature; but I have many reliefs and alleviations, and every external comfort; for which I desire to be most thankful. I sometimes feel it a comfort that, however my other powers may fail, the principle of love does not, and I take some encouragement from 1 John iii., 14.

If thy brother Josiah is with thee, pray give my kind love to him; he is one for whom I have a most sincere regard, as well as for thyself. He must be a great help and comfort to thee.

I am, very dear William,
Thy very affectionate friend,
C. GURNEY.

Before leaving Paris William Forster received the account of the decease of Catherine Gurney; and in his last letter to his wife from France, a short time before embarking from Calais, he thus alludes to it:—

My brother had a letter from Samuel Gurney, which told us of dear Catherine's peaceful departure. As to myself, I feel that I have lost a faithful and dear friend, and I shall

miss her much. But, so far from sorrowing without hope, I have such a sweet and satisfactory sense that all is safe and well with her, that I can scarcely sorrow at all—nothing but rejoice and give thanks that her measure here on earth is filled up; that she has passed through the dark valley; that all her conflict is over, and that now all is light, life, peace, rest, joy, and glory for evermore.

Among the interesting events which took place this year was the marriage of his son to Jane M., daughter of the late Dr. Arnold of Rugby.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ANTI-SLAVERY VISIT IN SPAIN.

More than ten months had been spent on the Continent during his late interesting tour among the nations of Europe. But it was not long after his return home that William Forster thought it right to prepare for a similar engagement in Spain; and on the 8th of the Third Month, 1851, he again left his comfortable residence at Earlham-road, in order to proceed to that kingdom with a view of putting into circulation there also the Address of the Yearly Meeting on the Slave Trade and Slavery.

On the following day he writes from London to his wife:—

I think it is a comfort for us, and something upon which we may possibly have to fall back in time of trial, that we may trust that this first step towards the point I have so long had before me has not been taken in a presumptuous mind; and that if it be not the will of our Lord that I should go forward, in condescension to my weakness, whenever He sees meet, He will put forth his hand to stay my proceeding.

On the 10th he writes to her again:—

The committee was summoned to meet me previously to the Morning Meeting on Second-day. Friends were very loving, and made full expression of their sympathy, and encouragement, and unity—and there was the same feeling and expression in the meeting. It would have been a comfort to me, for thee to have been a partaker of it.

My brother went with me to the Foreign Office, and afte wards to the Spanish Ambassador's, in Cavendish-squar At the embassy we saw the Secretary of Legation; he sa the ambassador was confined by illness, and not to be seen.

This morning went to Carlton-gardens. Encountered most positive denial and refusal from one of the servants. H persisted in his lies until, by dint of perseverance, we co vinced him that we came by appointment; he then took o cards. Nothing could be more cordial and kind than o reception. Lord Palmerston was quite disposed for conve sation, and for an account of my travels, and evidently too an interest in my report.

I thought I could discover that there was nothing la nearer to his heart than the safety and prosperity of th kingdom of Sardinia. I begged him to keep an eye upon th poor Protestants in the valleys, and to stand their friend i case of need. I said a word for good King Oskar; but thought he seemed to know less of Sweden than any part c Europe. He talked freely and very hopefully of their measure for the suppression of the slave-trade; and I do believe h wishes to do what he can for its utter extinction.

Upon my making allusion to my journey into the Peninsula he went to his desk and wrote a private letter to Lor Howden, and one to the British Minister at Lisbon. H had previously sent, or given orders for official letters fron Downing-street. There was hardly anything that he said tha was not worth remembering; you can hardly conceive hov much, and what a variety of interests were crowded into s short a space of time.

The Spanish Minister received us very warmly; looke really ill, quite disposed for talk, in French, and offere me a letter to their Minister on Foreign Affairs,—told m where I should get good accommodations at Madrid, an nothing appeared like opposition to me or the object of m journey.

Accompanied by his former associate, Edmun Richards, and his young friend William Rasche, h

crossed over to France on the 13th, and proceeded without much delay to Paris. From that city he writes on the 16th :—

E. R. and I went to the Institution of the *Diaconesses* (Protestant). Their hospital was my principal object; there was a good appearance of cleanliness and comfort. But nothing pleased me so much as their ward for poor little scrofulous children : they appeared to be thoroughly well cared for; all of them quite young. It reminded me of the children's ward in the Protestant hospital at Dresden ; everything seemed to be done for their help and recovery, and ample provision for their pleasure and amusement. In that respect, I often think that poor little children in our hospitals are much neglected.

From Paris they pursued their course towards Spain ; and William Forster writes again from Bordeaux on the 24th :—

We finished off by going to see a reformatory and industrial establishment, for boys of this and a few of the adjoining departments. It is the only sight I have seen in this fine city ; and certainly it was well worth going to see one hundred and sixty young people, between ten and eighteen years of age, all of them diligently, happily, and, as far I could judge, skilfully employed as *forgerons*, *serruriers*, *menuisiers*, *tailleurs*, *cordonniers*; and some of them making most beautiful and costly carpets, on the mode adopted in the manufacture of Turkey carpets : I understand they have sent one to London for the Exhibition. Their master spoke in unequivocal terms of their good conduct; and certainly their fine open countenances did not bespeak very guilty consciences. Their report of the result of their discipline is almost as much as I can believe. The average recommittal for crime of those who have been imprisoned there does not amount to 3 per cent. : the larger proportion, they said, turn out *honnêtes ouvriers*, marry and do well. The French certainly manage

these things better than with us; or else, as I believe to be the case, they take in hand a less depraved set of boys than those committed to our prisons.

They travelled on, by way of Bayonne and Burgos, to Madrid; and on the 3rd of the Fourth Month, William Forster writes from that city:—

I cannot say that my health is in any respect worse than before I left home. Indeed, I think that since coming here, I have had rather less oppression and pain; and I am sure I ought to be very thankful for it. Sometimes I am cast down and laid very low. I can honestly say I desire, and labour after a willing and submissive mind; and have been brought to it for the last few days to a greater degree than for a long time past. At present our prospect is not very promising. My great desire and concern is to move along step by step, and from day to day, just as our path may open before us. So that if at last we should find the door to be shut against us, I may have the comfort of feeling that, small as may be the result of the effort I have made in coming here, I have done what I could.

Through the kind application of Lord Howden, the British Minister for Foreign Affairs, they obtained an audience with the Queen of Spain; and an opportunity was thus given of presenting to her in person the address on the slave-trade and slavery. The Queen said she received it with pleasure; beyond which scarcely any thing appears to have passed. By the kind assistance of a gentleman named Cortazar, to whom the Spanish Ambassador in London had given William Forster a letter of introduction, way was also made, a few days afterwards, to present a copy of the address to the Queen Mother.

Much time was consumed, in the course of this month, in waiting for such interviews, and in printing

the address for distribution. On the latter subject W. F. remarks :—

I doubt whether anybody would harm us if we were to go straight forward and get it printed without delay ; but I am so very desirous of paying all due attention to the law and customs of the country wherever I go, so far as I can with a clear conscience, that I had far rather err in over-caution, than run the risk of giving any occasion against us.

His care not to allow even a laudable curiosity to interfere with close attention to what he felt to be his primary duty, is manifest in the following observations :—

It may be that I shall go away without visiting the Museum. No doubt it contains the finest pictures in the world. In the galleries of the palace of the Minister of the Interior is a sample of what is to be seen at the Museum. One certainly ought to be satisfied that it is in the right ordering of things, and that one is under right restraint in not availing oneself of the enjoyment. I could not have believed it possible, that the art of man could have produced such works as I saw to-day—such expression, such exquisite touch and colour. It seemed as if one could have handled their limbs, and felt the texture of their clothes.

In reference to the translation of the address into Spanish, he says afterwards :—

It has undergone the revision of a gentleman who is employed by the embassy, also of Usoz, and of Cortazar ; each has suggested alterations which I deem to be improvements, and I now wish to be satisfied without any further revision. Do what you will, a translation must be a translation, and seldom turns out to be anything else. It would have done thee good to have heard one or two of Cortazar's remarks as he went over it ; it filled my eyes with tears of

joy. I thought it was worth coming to Madrid to hear from such a man such expression, and to perceive the evidence of such feeling, on the iniquity of slavery and its contingencies.

On the First-day morning he adds:—

Our landlady, who is a very zealous woman, has just been into our apartment to ornament the balconies with her silk counterpanes, as a grand procession is to come through the streets this morning. The houses are beginning to make a very gay appearance with scarlet, blue, and white. The opposite house, which is in the occupation of one of the grandees of Spain, has all its balconies bedecked with scarlet covering, which seems to be made for the purpose. W. R. says it is a procession for the benefit of the sick who do not attend at the public services of their fasts and festivals.

Much as there is in all this that makes one sad, it is less distressing to me than the infidelity of our own country, and some parts of the continent with which I have been made acquainted within the last few months; that does at times harass and afflict me beyond all expression. Oh! to think for a moment what it is for one man to be robbed of a sense of his accountableness, and, in the midst of the cares, and trials, and sorrows of life, to have no hope of rest, or peace, or joy in the world to come, nor to believe in the possibility of attaining to it.

Usoz was punctual to the time we had mentioned for our meeting. The street was in such a state of excitement—so much noise and disturbance, that I thought we could hardly sit down to much good purpose; but the time was not lost. We had conversation with our friend on subjects of deep interest. Our meeting, when we did sit down, was a time of much refreshment and comfort to my own mind, and my ministry was more to my relief and satisfaction than is often the case. Usoz was, as I thought, in a humble, tender mind, and I was glad to have him with us. If thou would like to know what was principally before me, turn to John xx. 19:—"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the

doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

I should say that a heavy rain came on and spoiled their fun—really the whole thing did not seem worthy of a better name, and the procession came not. O! what would I not do and suffer, if this fine and noble race of men might be brought into the truth as it is in Jesus!

The following extracts are taken from letters to his wife, in the course of the Fifth Month:—

Usoz came to our meeting and brought me a translation into Spanish of the "Lock and Key." We had a good time together. He told me incidentally of his having been confined in the prison of the Inquisition, in the very room in which Borrow was afterwards imprisoned, for having given a challenge to an officer who had spoken against his father's character. There is but little of that left in him now. He is a remarkably humble-minded man, given up to endure reproach and contempt, and, as I believe, to suffer persecution for the truth, if it should be permitted to come upon him. He is possessed of large property, both in the city and the country,—rich in vineyards and oliveyards.

In allusion to a visit W. F. paid to him he adds:—

I fancy he thought me rather shy in taking to the sweetmeats, which I certainly was; he said two or three times over, they were all Spanish. We did not immediately understand him. At last it came out that they were made of sugar the growth of Andalusia; and he said they used no other. This, of course, set me at liberty; for I had been rather unusually strict in not eating any of their colonial sugar since I came into Spain.

I have taken some pains to obtain information respecting the growth and manufacture of that used in Andalusia. As far as I can hear, the cultivation of the cane is at present confined to two or three valleys running into the Mediterranean, near

Malaga. The sugar is considered to be as good as tha imported from Cuba; and Usoz thinks it is very much use in Madrid, and in some instances sold as colonial suga There is a company formed for its manufacture: we hav been at their office, but could not gain all the information wished for. From what I could gather, I think they mad it answer; and that they are preparing to carry it out to larger extent than heretofore. I do not know that much i to be expected from it as to its effect upon the condition o the slaves in their colonies. But it is a curious and importan fact, as I believe it is the only instance of sugar being manu factured from the cane in any part of Europe, as an articl of trade.

17th.—I do not know that ever I was so fully occupied b any one object as within the last ten days or two weeks, or tha I ever felt more sensible of the value of every hour. My health sometimes has suffered from the want of exercise and fresh air; once I took a carriage and went out of town, and was certainly the better for it.

Much as we have done in the way of circulating the address, we have still enough before us to give employment for a few days longer. I believe we are right in giving a large publicity to the concern of Friends; and I hope, if it does no more, it may draw the attention of the public to the subject. It is to me an affecting consideration, that whilst the British have been using their sugar, and we must believe giving large encouragement to the importation of slaves from Africa, nothing has been said or done in Spain except the correspondence between our Government and theirs. I cannot hear that a word has been issued from the press, in any form, for the last three or four years, and it may be longer. I imagine that much more has been said and written within that time in Brazil than in any part of Spain. The few that we have met with well affected to our concern say that nobody dares openly to utter a word upon the question, or I should say against it. This makes me so much the more desirous of leaving nothing undone that they will allow us to do; and I much incline to believe that it is better for us to stay here, and make use of

the post from Madrid, than to leave it till we get into any of the provincial cities, where possibly we might meet with difficulties that would greatly hinder us.

Pray do all thou canst, everywhere and with everybody, to persuade them to be very careful not to use sugar made by the labour of slaves. I have found a confectioner a few paces from our lodging who assures me that they use none but Spanish sugar. I go there and talk about it, but the subject seems new and strange to them. I wish to give a little *fête* to the deaf and dumb school, forty of them, a fine intelligent set of lads from the provinces who are under a good course of training. I have made a stir about the cakes being made of Spanish sugar, and W. has been out this morning to buy it.

The cruelty and wickedness of the bull-fights often make me very sorrowful. In the interview we had with the Archbishop of Toledo (he is considered the head of the church establishment in Spain), I thought it right to say a few words on the subject. He heard me patiently,—said nothing in support of them. The little he did say was on the other side of the question. We went into the amphitheatre the other day; they say it will hold 20,000 persons, and the man said that they had 12,000 last Second-day. He gave me a few particulars; but I think his account of bulls and horses killed that evening must be an exaggeration, though I wrote down the figures and showed them to him, and he said they were right.

5th mo. 18th.—We went on a short excursion into the country yesterday; I really wanted a little fresh air. The Count of Ossuna took us in his carriage to his chateau; it was occupied by Bonaparte when his army had possession of Madrid, and there he signed the famous decree for the abolition of the Inquisition. Nothing can be more dreary and comfortless than the general appearance of the country, up to the walls, or rather to the environs, of Madrid: in many directions not a tree to be seen, though those planted in avenues on the high road, within half a mile or a mile of the city, grow very well. The surface of the country is what the Americans call "rolling,"—gently undulating—mountains in the

background, about twelve or fifteen miles distant, covered wit snow—light soil and light crops. It reminds one of the mos dreary parts of Newmarket Heath; though one misses th fine large plantations by which that country is rendered s much less desolate in appearance. It is no easy thing t describe the difference between a rural chateau in Spain an a first-rate country gentleman's house in England. A grea deal of the furniture remains, which has a degree of grandeu attached to it. The garden, which is laid out in terraces an ornamented with statues, must have been made at considerabl expense; but nothing can be a greater contrast, than it artificiality and formality, to our style of gardens—to ou lawns and flowers, and shrubberies and plantations. They had fruit-trees in great variety,—apricots, peaches, apples pears, figs, and vines. The peaches they say are very fine As to flowers, you can hardly imagine how small is the variety, and so poor. The bouquets brought into Madrid are of the most common flowers, such as would not be thought worth gathering with us. Strawberries are coming into season, very small, but not of much flavour. Cherries they say are abundant, but the fruit I have seen are very poor. Some of their vegetables are pretty good; spinach one of the best; asparagus very fine; artichokes abundant in the season; peas I think poor. The country people, and lower class in the cities, live very much on pulse, beans, and a kind of large pea. The bread is good, better than in France, finer and whiter than in most parts of England.

I wish very carefully to feel our way as to our departure hence, both when and where. Whichever course we may believe to be the path opened for us, I must try to hope for help to make a willing surrender of myself to the service, and quietly and patiently to endure whatever may be allowed to come upon me. My heart is ready to fail when I think of the nervous agitation to which I have been so much a prey in my travels, by sea and land, within the last few years, and, more or less, all my life. I feel the comfort of having a friend with me who has an understanding of my infirmity, and, is kindly careful and considerate of me.

Before leaving Madrid they forwarded the following address to the Spanish Minister:—

To BERTRAND DE LIS, *Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in the Government of Spain.*

Having accomplished the object which brought us to this city, we feel that we can do no less, before we take our departure, than very gratefully acknowledge the kindness we have received from the ministers of the Crown of Spain, and from others holding office in the Government. We are thankful that the way had been made for our obtaining access to the Sovereign of this realm, and that we have been permitted to discharge the duty entrusted to us, by offering the Queen a copy of the address from the religious Society of Friends in Great Britain and Ireland, on the cruelty, the horrors, and the sinfulness of the African slave-trade, and upon the injustice of negro slavery; that so many of the ministers of the Government have granted us an audience, and allowed us to present to them personally a copy of the address; and that, during the many weeks we have spent in Madrid, we have met with no impediment in attending to what we have believed to be our duty in sending the address by special messenger to the houses of persons of rank and influence in the city, and by post to those occupying stations of authority in the provinces.

We are strangers in a strange land; but we trust we shall not be taking too much upon ourselves in again commending the object we have at heart to the sympathy and conscientious attention of the ministers of the Crown. It is an object of deep and constant solicitude to our brethren in religious Society, and it is that which has induced us, in the decline of life, to leave our homes and to travel into a country so distant from our habitation. We humbly and earnestly beseech them to keep their hearts open to a sense of the sorrows and sufferings inflicted upon the people of Africa by the continuance of the slave-trade, and to use all such means as comport with the peaceable nature of the Christian religion in putting an end at once and for ever to the trade in slaves from that continent

to the Spanish colonies in the West Indies, and for the accomplishment of the abolition of slavery itself; so that those now subject to its degradation and oppression may be put into possession of the rights and liberty enjoyed by other citizens of this nation.

We entertain a warm and lively interest in the welfare, the peace, and prosperity of this great nation. It is our strong desire that it may please the Lord Almighty largely to bless the rulers of the land, and the people whom they govern; and that Spain may take her full share, in unison with the other nations of Europe, in promoting the improvement, the civilization, and the happiness of the inhabitants of Africa, and of the whole world.

30th.—We made inquiry respecting the course to Barcelona; and at length, as we have thought the way opened for us step by step, we have gone so far as to take our places for to-morrow in the diligence for Valencia.

I do not intend to spare myself, nor do I wish to be spared as long as any strength is left in me, and there remains anything for me to do, either in the great object of the concern of the Yearly Meeting, or in any other line of duty in which I may be called upon to labour in this country, or for the good of this people. No words can describe the sense of oppression and suffering under which I am sometimes borne down, in the feeling that I have, that the word of the Lord is bound.

What is there that I would not endure if I might, within ever such narrow limits, or upon ever so small a scale, be permitted to speak of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to tell of the love, the wisdom, and the power of God in the rich and large provision He has made for our peace and everlasting happiness in the gospel of his own dear Son, our Saviour.

But it will not always be thus. I have no doubt an effectual door will be opened, and that many tongues will be unloosed to speak boldly and largely of those things that pertain to the kingdom of Christ; and that there will be in days to come—it is not for us to say how soon—those that

will flock like doves to the windows. When once the standard is raised, many are they that will be gathered to it and stand by it.

We have heard of the death of Sylvanus Fox: it is very touching to me how many of my old friends are gone—how few there are left! He was always, from the very first acquaintance, one of my most loving and faithful friends; and I knew his worth.

I think I have written about 2000 directions, and of course signed as many of our circulars. I never could write very quickly, and writing strange names of persons and places is slow work at best; all this, and much that was contingent to it, thou wilt suppose could not be done in a day. I do not complain, and I must beg thee not to mention it. It is in truth but a small service, though it has often cost me much in the way of thoughtfulness and anxiety. I have generally found it as well, or best for me not to be careful as to the result of any small efforts I may have thought it right to make as matter of religious duty. I must confess I did rather wish to know what were the effects of the large distribution we have made in this place; but little has come to light, yet quite enough to give me to believe that the labour has not been thrown away.

Since those fearful and awful depths into which I was plunged about ten days or a fortnight after I came here, I have often enjoyed a stayed, and contented, and quiet mind. It was more of a baptism than ever I was brought to before. It might be altogether the work of a morbid imagination; and I am sure I will not say that it was not; but, whether or not, it answered the purpose of bringing me to the test, and of trying and proving me, and the concern to which I had devoted myself; and I wish to remember with thankfulness and praise that I was enabled to endure, and to give myself up to die for the truth's sake, whatever might be the form in which death might be brought upon me. In those hours, I had a sense of sympathy with many of those blessed ones who bore testimony to their Lord in this city, and in other places,

in days of darkness and cruel device, which we hope are gone by for ever.

Pray tell me what thou hears of Henry Tuke. I wish he could know of the affectionate tenderness with which I think of him. He may be told that when I turn my thoughts towards him, both with reference to this life and the life that is to come, all is rest and peace, and anticipation of joy and glory without end.

After a journey of forty-eight hours in the diligence, through a chain of mountains, and a considerable extent of pine forests, over very bad roads with deep ruts, William Forster and his companion reached Valencia on the 2nd of the Sixth Month. From this place he writes on the 9th :—

We are about to leave, and have taken our places for Barcelona. I have endeavoured diligently and faithfully to do my best in giving circulation to the address. We have sent out somewhere about 380, in envelopes, to almost all sorts of people—civil and municipal authorities, trade, church, university, seminaries, law, medicine, and nobility. The Governor has been most civil, and our Vice-consul, Ignatius Peyloron, a Spanish gentleman, no less so. At first we had some difficulty in meeting with the help we needed ; at last we got hold of a man who seemed to know everybody, and fully answered our purpose.

I came to Valencia, I believe, very much given up to go along the coast by land or sea to Cadiz, or across the country to Seville, or in any other direction. I have sometimes felt myself overpowered by feebleness, and much oppressed. The heat of summer is come at last, and I feel it.

The horrid cruelties of the bull-fights haunted us to the last. On the Second-day before we left, it was said six bulls and eighteen horses were killed. The passion for these disgusting spectacles is so deeply rooted in the population of the Spanish nation, that it must be the work of a long time

before it can be eradicated, or to any great degree suppressed; but that is no reason why nothing should be said or done towards it.

When they were on the point of leaving for Barcelona, they were furnished with the names of several towns in the provinces; and they immediately took measures to forward the address through the post to twenty-eight persons holding the office of alcaide, answering to that of the English sheriff. They then proceeded on their journey, and William Forster goes on to say:—

Barcelona.—We got through the journey from Valencia hither in safety. I am sure I ought to be very thankful for it. I cannot say that it was without suffering; but there were many alleviations: a pleasant breeze from the sea almost the whole of the way; a good and easy passage across the mouth of the Ebro, and nothing to alarm us all the way. There were robbers on the road not long ago, and I had a pretty heavy bag of dollars ready for them; but they came not. I make no pretensions to physiognomy or phrenology, and am sometimes glad that I know so little about it; but I have hardly seen a man among the peasantry in Spain with whom I would not trust myself and what I had with me. They look like a hard-working, happy set of people. I dare-say many of them are poor enough: but not so very poor, if one may judge by that which is to be seen by a peep into their houses.

6th mo. 22nd.—I have been in different parts of the city, but as yet have seen but little to interest me. Valencia is an old place, very much answering to the idea I had formed of the cities in the south of Spain: short narrow streets, most of them without pavement; large houses with a central area, and what we should consider as the ground floor very much open to the street. Madrid is certainly a fine city, and makes an appearance of wealth and luxury much beyond my

expectation. In the little intercourse we had with people there, I heard so much of the corrupt state of society as often made me sick at heart; and though I became really attached to the few acquaintances we made there, I could not be sorry to come away.

24th.—We have secured our places in the diligence to Perpignan. We have sent out 677 of the address by special messenger, and 240 by post.

This is a fête-day, and the city has been in a state of great excitement since last Fifth-day, which was one of their principal *jours de fête* in the whole year. There have been processions every day, mostly in the evening. I never saw so much of these things before, and certainly do not wish to see the like again.

To-morrow is to be our last day at Barcelona, and probably my last day in Spain; the thought of it brings me to some depth of feeling. Nothing but the belief that it was laid upon me could have made me willing to submit to the trial of it; and now I have the comfort of believing that the way is open for my return. I have diligently endeavoured to do my best; after all, it may seem to amount to little, but I am not conscious of having left much or anything undone.

Thus closed his labours in Spain. He and his companion now proceeded by way of Perpignan to Toulouse, in the south of France. In that city, and at Montauban, opportunities for religious service presented, which, as a minister of Christ, William Forster felt it to be his duty to embrace—in the former place with some serious Protestants, and in the latter with the students in the Protestant college. After this they pursued their homeward journey, and were favoured to arrive in safety in London, on the 11th of the Seventh Month, 1851.

To William Forster, in his lowly walk by faith with God,—constrained by the love of Christ, and led by

the Spirit—it was no small thing to have accomplished such a service on the continent, to which he had now devoted more than a year of close labour. To the Christian community of which he was a member, it was cause for thankfulness to have seen it "laid upon him," thus far to carry out its long-cherished concern on behalf of a cruelly wronged and oppressed people. However great the expenditure of time and strength, the magnitude and inveteracy of the evil sufficiently justified the attempt thus to draw the attention of the Governments of Europe to its enormity, and to the importance of a combined effort for its removal, as one of the foulest blots upon their common profession of Christianity.

About four months after his return from Spain, W. F. entered upon a visit of Christian love among "the Friends with whom he was formerly associated in the West of England, particularly in the counties of Dorset and Hants, and some meetings in Somersetshire;" but of this religious engagement, interesting as it must have been on many accounts, as his last visit to those among whom he had resided so long, no particulars are preserved.

CHAPTER XLV.

VISIT TO THE VAUDOIS OF PIEDMONT, ETC.

MUCH of the early part of 1852 was spent in the retirement of home, amidst the ordinary avocations of a life devoted to the service of Christ, in that liveliness of spirit and watchfulness unto prayer which are essential to keeping open the springs of true consolation and strength in the heart of the believer—ready to be equipped for every fresh service that his divine Master may be pleased to require of him. When the Yearly Meeting drew near, William Forster went up to London, and, much to the comfort of his friends, took his part in the deliberations and labours called forth by the exigencies of the Church. Little as there is to record respecting these services, it may not be unsuitable here to notice them on one occasion.

He remarked on the value of a forbearing spirit, in the earnest desire that, in remembering our own imperfections, we may be brought to a lowly, humble state of mind. The more we feel how much we need the forbearance of others, the more shall we exercise it ourselves. Love to the brethren was an evidence that the early believers had passed from death unto life. What is it to pass from an earthly to a heavenly mind! The more we are really kept alive to God, the deeper will be our dependence upon Him.

There is no other religion than that which was the religion of the early Christians, of the church of God from that day

to this. We know nothing else than this: we wish for nothing else; we expect nothing else than that which comes by Christ;—his gospel is the everlasting gospel. We have no clearer evidence of a growth in what is good—in vital godliness, than as we cling closer and closer to Him as our Mediator, Advocate, and only hope of glory.

Soon after his return home he laid before his Monthly Meeting a religious concern "to pay a visit to the descendants of the ancient Vaudois in the valleys of Piedmont, in some parts of France, and the city of Geneva, and to attend to such other service as, in the course of his journey, he might feel to be laid upon him, in the north of Italy and on his way home." Certificates of the unity and approval of his friends of this undertaking were freely granted him, and towards the end of the Ninth Month he left home to carry out the prospect before him. He was accompanied in this journey by his friend William Holmes, and Jules Paradon joined them as interpreter. Passing through France, on his way to Geneva, he held a meeting at Sens, of which he gives the following account:—

At Sens I obtained from a colporteur and the *instituteur* of the Protestant school all the information I wished for. I endeavoured to see how far the way was opened for a meeting in the evening. Upon making them acquainted with the concern, they very readily fell in with it: we left it in their hands. The meeting was held in a room adjoining the chapel; we had not a large company—just enough for the place. We soon settled down into solemn quiet. I endeavoured, through the help of an interpreter, to communicate that which was brought before me; and there appeared a remarkable feeling of openness to receive it. I had at my right hand a

jardinier in his *blouse*, whom I took to be a good, spiritual, experienced Christian. Towards the close of the meeting he spoke with much fervour and solemnity; and, according to my understanding of such things, it had very much the character of what we consider to be true gospel ministry. He had been brought out of the Church of Rome within a few years, and is spoken of in terms of much esteem and respect; evidently a man of no great amount of education, but well taught in the best school. How glad we should be to have a few such men brought in amongst us!

The colporteur, a sensible, well-behaved, and Christian man, came to us at the hotel, and gave me very interesting and affecting details of the *empêchement* thrown in the way of his pursuing his calling. I felt so far relieved that I did not hesitate to come off by the express night train about ten o'clock; and had a good journey in time for the boat at Chalons.

A meeting with a similar class of persons was held at Lyons, to his satisfaction; after which he and his companions proceeded to Geneva. From that city he writes on the 17th:—

We are just come in. I found Gaussen kind and open-hearted; his daughter, and sister, and mother (a good-spirited old lady, not very far from ninety years of age) so much the same it might have seemed that not more than a week had elapsed since I saw them before. The daughter kindly undertook to interpret a few sentences for me; and I trust we were all of us refreshed and comforted together under some sense of the presence of our Lord. Gaussen parted from me in much tenderness, and with the expression of his good wishes; and has given me a letter of introduction to one of his friends in the valleys. I took courage, and told him of my concern for an opportunity with the young men, students in their college. I told him if he did not see the way open for it to say "No," and I did not doubt but I should be

satisfied. He and his daughter entered most kindly into the concern, and he undertook to make arrangement for it.*

The meeting was held the following afternoon, and W. H. remarks respecting it :—

The students were assembled to the number of twenty-six in one of their lecture rooms. Merle d'Aubigné was too unwell to be there; but his friend La Harpe proved a very kind and excellent interpreter. W. F. had passed through much exercise in the prospect of this meeting. It was, I believe, a very relieving opportunity. He addressed them for more than half an hour very impressively. The great importance of their knowing that real change of heart which is essential to the true Christian was a prominent feature in

* Dr. Gaussen was for more than thirty years the colleague of Merle D'Aubigné in the Evangelical Seminary of Geneva. On his decease, on the 18th of Sixth Month, 1863, in his seventy-third year, the latter wrote a brief sketch of his life and labours, from which the following particulars are taken :—

"Geneva has just lost one of her most remarkable men, and the Church of Christ at large one of her brightest ornaments and most faithful servants.

Gaussen had been a distinguished scholar in the University of Geneva; he maintained a lively interest in the progress of discovery, in natural philosophy, astronomy, geology, and other sciences. Nothing was foreign to that noble and capacious intellect. He entered the ministry in 1815, and was married in 1816. After a year of great happiness he lost his wife. This event produced a solemn impression on his feeling heart. It was like a call from on high to devote his life entirely to the Lord, to strive to bring souls to Christ—to awaken their longing for eternal life, and to comfort the afflicted by the promises of the gospel.

Dr. Gaussen's faith, which had been established through the study of the Holy Scriptures, and which had seized those life-giving truths so firmly held by the Reformers, received at this period the baptism of sorrow, and acquired the deep and intimate character which it retained ever after. His ministry had henceforth a degree of power, of grandeur, of unction, of pathos, and of winning eloquence, which were remarkable. Many are still living who can remember the impression it made. His fellow-students, and also his professors, could not but see in him a distinguished theologian. He was convinced that for the triumph of the

the commencement. It was altogether a very interesting interview. At the close he presented each with a copy of the "Lock and Key," previously put up and directed. They appeared to take leave of him with a feeling of true Christian interest. Copies of the "Lock and Key," to the number of about fifty, were likewise put up and directed to each of the students in the other college, and forwarded to them.

During their stay in Geneva William Forster paid a visit also to Cæsar Malan,* whose Christian character he cordially appreciated; though, equally Evangelical as he was in his views of the "doctrines of grace," he did not see eye to eye with the Geneva doctor on all points, especially as it regards the

Christian faith, and for the happiness of man, it is essential to lay as a foundation the great truths of the gospel. He felt that in this there had been a spiritual and doctrinal declension during the eighteenth century, and that the times required in a peculiar manner that the faith of Christians should be based on strong and solid convictions. He felt that on the possession of such convictions depended the health and life of the Church, and of society at large.

At the same time that he was handling the disputed questions in theology with so much life and vigour, nothing could be more beautiful than to see that great and learned man becoming a child for children, and Sabbath after Sabbath instructing them in the elements of gospel truth. Dr. Gaussen has done more for the promotion of Sabbath schools in the Protestant Churches on the Continent than any other man in Europe.

During the latter years of his life his strength diminished by little and little; the oil was lowering in the lamp which had been so long "a burning and a shining light in which many rejoiced," but which was soon to be extinguished. That precious faith which had been the joy of his life, was his strength in the valley of the shadow of death. The love for the Saviour which had filled his heart during the days of health did not fail him in the end, and a feeling of perfect peace was manifest in his whole deportment."

* The following abstract of an obituary notice respecting him, by one of his friends, may be interesting to the reader:—

"Dr. C. Malan died near Geneva, on the 8th of May, 1864, in his seventy-eighth year. He was born before the outbreak of the French

predestinarian question. With reference to the interview he remarks:—

It cost me some thought before I reached Geneva, and whilst I was there. I went in rather a trembling mind, and in much doubt whether it might be acceptable to him. He received me with more openness than I could have anticipated, and acknowledged himself refreshed and comforted by the visit. I am never likely to see him again, and think it a favour to myself to have discharged that little labour of love: that and the meeting I had with the students are opportunities that I do not wish to forget. La Harpe's interpretation on that occasion was little less than a luxury: he called the next morning, and made further offer of his services; but I thought I had obtained my discharge, and that was enough for me.

Revolution, and was in the prime of manhood when, simultaneously with the blessings of restored peace, a revival of Evangelical faith began on the Continent. He liked to ascribe his conversion, under the power of the Spirit, to the direct influence of the Scriptures; and it was between the years 1816 and 1819 that, as a young preacher of no small promise, he first made a stand for the doctrines of the gospel. In the church of Geneva the truth of God had, at that time, been forsaken to such a degree, that when Malan raised his voice, the doctrines of the Divinity of Christ, of the personality of the Holy Spirit, of the atonement through the blood of Jesus, and the free grace of God, were resisted and condemned both by the ecclesiastical and the civil power. The laws of his country secured him his personal freedom; but he was expelled from his post in the college, and his name was struck off from the roll of ministers. He gave up without hesitation acquired advantages and expectations; and, separated from the National Church, he gathered round him those whom his teaching had already awakened, and in 1820 he formed an independent congregation. His zeal for the conversion of souls was unbounded, and he always stood determinedly opposed to all kinds of Socinian and Arian teaching, to every doctrine of self-righteousness, to every opinion disparaging to the name and authority of the Eternal Head of the Church. This it was which kept him apart for a long series of years from the church of his birth which he loved—but loved with an affection surpassed by his love for Zion's King, the Redeemer of his soul.

It was well-known that Dr. Malan held those theological views designated as strict Calvinism. Their rigidity, and his mode of enforcing

They left Geneva on the 20th, and, after a fatiguing journey of two nights, by the diligence, they reached Turin. On the frontier of Sardinia the tracts and books on religious subjects which William Forster had brought out with him, had been detained by the Custom-house officers, and he had no small difficulty in recovering them. After much delay, and having several times to appear at the proper office, they were, however, given up; and he remarks on this occasion:—

I am really thankful to be allowed to proceed; and I hope to be helped so to walk watchfully and wisely, that the little intercourse I may have with those I meet with may be to the quieting of their minds rather than to their agitation or excitement.

From Turin the travellers now went forward direct to the scene of William Forster's labours, among "The Men of the Valleys," with a history "not less

them, raised opposition on the part even of many pious persons whose ideas were not of an equally absolute complexion. This was to him a source of constant grief; and he was not always quite enough considerate towards those who dissented from him, finding it difficult to admit the reality of convictions differing from his own. But whatever there was to regret on this account, he remains entitled to the distinction of having been throughout a long life an undaunted and indefatigable champion of the gospel. He was decisively instrumental in raising amongst us the standard of pure and orthodox teaching. Even those who could not agree with him in many things, were both impelled and strengthened by his presence and his voice, always ready with no uncertain sound on the side of the Truth.

Dr. Malan has written a good deal, but published no theological work of note. Some of his tracts are among the best in the French language. His hymns, of which he wrote many, remain as a precious legacy. Some have been translated into other languages.

His faith shone brightly to the end. He enjoyed his assurance of salvation through the merits of the Saviour alone, in the near approach of death, as fully as in the days of health and strength; and he fell asleep in the Lord."

romantic than that of the land of Tell and Winkelried, with services to the cause of pure Christianity rendered centuries earlier than those of Zuingle, Calvin, Luther, or even Wycliffe." Arrived at La Tour, he writes to his wife:—

10th mo. 29th. La Tour.—We have just been holding our little meeting; a day or two out, of course; but I could not think of giving it up.

Whilst W. H. and Jules are making terms with the *maître-d'hôtel*, I wish to lose no time in writing a very short letter, just to tell thee of our safe and peaceful arrival in the valleys of the Vaudois.

On reaching Pignerol about one o'clock, we found that the conveyance for La Tour would not start till five in the afternoon; but as it seemed that a carriage was to be hired at a moderate cost that would bring us here in two hours, we agreed to take it, ordered some dinner, and made a stroll through the town.

At Turin they told me I could have some printing done there, and that I could have the help of the professors at the college for the correction of the press. I have now very much made up my mind to have a few Scripture books printed in Italian. I feel the responsibility of every little matter of the sort; and hope and desire to do all things carefully and wisely. Every now and then I shrink into the timidity of my nature, and then again I rise above it; and, in what I think to be the reviving of faith, I am helped to look forwards with a desire to pursue the path that I may believe to be set before me; and in such moments, with thanksgiving and praise, mixed with fear and trembling, I can look around me and rejoice in that which I see and hear of fields white unto harvest.

There is the appearance of great activity and commercial prosperity at Turin; in its environs, which the Piedmontese like to speak of as "*il progresso*"—are large houses built since I was there, of the size of which we can form but little idea. One

house nearly finished near the terminus, that Malan said would cost £40,000, and perhaps would be let for the dwellings of from eighty to a hundred families, some of them costly and spacious apartments, and other houses in the neighbourhood about the same size. Nothing gave me so much the idea of what was going forward in the city as the throng of carts we met for the first few miles out of town, mostly laden with bricks.

The country all the way to Pignerol is flat; beautifully rich meadows, mulberries in large abundance, corn, and, as we got further from the city, some large vineyards. On the whole, it had much the same appearance as the plains of Lombardy, only much more land in the meadows. We saw large droves of cows, Alderney or Norman breed, of a mouse colour, with beautiful or rather elegant heads and necks. They may well be a little proud of their cattle. We had a good second-rate road all the way to La Tour; ascending ground the latter part of the way, but not what we should call hilly.

We find this large hotel very much unoccupied and plainly furnished, very different to be sure from Turin, but some degrees above the French in point of cleanliness; the people (Vaudois) very civil and attentive. I am glad to say they understand my French; that was more than they did at Pignerol; there they speak mostly Italian or patois.

La Tour is something of a town; the hills in the immediate neighbourhood remind me of Ardenne in Normandy, and of Herefordshire and parts of South Wales, covered with wood to the tops; the snowy Alps in the background. Such a view from my chamber-door when the sun was shining! The place is something like some of the small towns in Wales.

Sixth-day night.—I think we have pretty much made up our minds to try to get as far as Bobbio to-morrow. They speak of it as a mountainous road, and considering my great difficulties in walking, it is somewhat of an enterprise; but I must try. I went out this afternoon, and got a little among the people, from some of whom I met with a cordial greeting. It did a little touch me that, when at the house of one of the farmers, they

asked me to come again. I thought that possibly I might be allowed to accept it; and that they would hereafter receive the little I might have to say to them. It was much in accordance with the overflowings of my heart this morning when, without seeking it, the substance of Ruth i. 16—"Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" —formed much of my meditation; and I felt as much or more than ever given up, body, soul, and spirit, to spend and be spent, if in any way I might be made useful to those I came to visit.

Their vines have not yielded more than one-fifth or one-sixth of their usual quantity. One thing is pretty clear, that the little they have to carry them through the year cannot do them much harm. The potatoes, they said, were passable. The Indian corn was hanging up to dry. I saw a pretty good supply of fruit in the market.

William Forster's first services were directed to the inhabitants of the Valley of Perouse. They are thus described by his companion, W. H.:—

The Moderator, Revel, very kindly entered into the object of the visit, and arranged for a meeting at La Tour on the afternoon of First-day, the 31st, consenting also to act as interpreter. About 250 persons attended; it was an agreeable meeting, and W. F. seemed to be relieved. The next day he was at the college, where about ninety young persons are educated. On Fourth-day a meeting was held at Pignerol; about thirty attended; it was a satisfactory opportunity; some very interesting persons were of the company. On Sixth-day a meeting was held at Ville-seche, after a walk along the mountain-stream of four or five miles, and an ascent up the mountain at the end of the walk. It was held in a school-room, the master an interesting, serious young man. On First-day afternoon there was another meeting at Combe Garni, in their meeting-house, where many serious persons

attended. In Thirsk we had an interesting company in a meeting in a school-room at Sowerby.

The next meeting was held in St. Germain's. About 30 persons were present, and William Forster says of it:—

This came in from the largest meeting I have yet attended in the valley, and a good meeting it was according to my sense of things. The people were well-behaved and loving: and I spoke the truth to them as far as I believed it to be given me in many journeys of speech. I think they felt a little of the love that had brought me among them. As to myself I do not know that I had felt it more sensibly at any of our meetings.

On the following evening a meeting was held at Pramol, at which again about 300 persons attended. They reached the home of J. Vernon, after a walk of two hours and three quarters, and W. H. remarks: "It was affecting to see the trial that it was to dear W. F., but at the same time instructive; his powers were, I believe, on this occasion tried to their full extent." William Forster speaks of this occasion in the following terms:—

The latter part of the way was much of a mountain-path, not less than 2,000 feet above the village; much of the way it was like climbing a broken staircase. I thought it well I had not to make the effort in the summer months. We found our friends prepared for us; we had but a very short walk to the school-house, and found a large building, well seated and well filled, a quiet, orderly congregation. I was, I trust, helped through the evening; the dear old people have been living there thirty years, and brought up a large family, who are now very much scattered abroad in Egypt, Odessa, Switzerland, &c. They are living in a very simple way—no

servant—their youngest son, their only child, at home; everything was most clean and comfortable, and thoroughly to be enjoyed. Before we left them we had a heart-tendering time together, which I shall not soon forget; the old man's heart was indeed very full.

We have a long table set out in my chamber, which is my sitting-room, for the entertainment of the young men of the *école normale*, lately established for the training of schoolmasters for the valleys. They are generally the sons of Vaudois peasants, boarding themselves in the neighbouring *hameaux*, and, from what I hear, living very hard. As there seemed no other place at which we could get them together, I thought of a little soirée of this kind—*riz au lait*, sausages (they hardly know the taste of meat), cakes, *pommes et poires*, nuts, cheese, *café au lait;* the table is set for seventeen.

I am glad and thankful to say that at last I have finished my "Vita di Pietro Apostolo;" it has cost me much both early and late, and I feel the relief of having it so far in progress.

11th mo. 18th.—Our soirée passed off very well. From the peculiar circumstances of the people, hedged up as they have been in these valleys for so many generations, and so much prohibited from intercourse with the world, it would be hardly reasonable to expect that they should keep pace with the progress of civilization. Things are now very different, and the coming generation will no doubt in many respects be a very different people. The Italian language will eventually take the place of the patois; the young men generally speak Italian, and many of them read it. They behaved thoroughly well, and carry with them a large amount of the best of respectability. It did not require much penetration to see that their minds were brimfull of intelligence, and that many of them have talent that would pay well for the expense and labour of cultivating it.

The Professor Tron, who has the special superintendence of them, put it to me to "*bénir la table.*" I asked for a few moments *tranquille.* We had rather a longer pause than sometimes; and I have not often been sensible of a deeper

solemnity. Before we broke up, I did my best in trying to make them sensible of what I thought and felt for them; and I spoke, as I often do, about repentance towards God, and the Saviour's love to man. After which Tron said a few words, and they went off.

19th.—We had a pleasant walk to St. Jean yesterday afternoon: we thought we were in good time, but we had scarcely reached the house of the minister before we met the schoolmaster, evidently come out to look for us, and bringing us word, "L'assemblée est formée." After a few moments at Bonjour's, where there was a sitting of the Consistoire, the *anciens* of the different quarters (a goodly-looking set of men, thoroughly Vaudois) having met, as they said, to make provision of warm clothing for the aged of their poor during the coming winter.

We went over to the school-house all together, and found a large room thoroughly packed with people, except a few chairs left, as it would seem, for the minister and their elders. I felt the weightiness of the occasion and was ready to tremble under a sense of it. In the renewings of that love which brought me here, I was soon emboldened to stand up, and enabled, as I humbly believe, to labour among them in the work of the Gospel of Christ. The meeting held till it was nearly dark; but the people kept together in much quietness, and at the close were hearty and very loving.

They make large provision for the education of their children, and it is so all through the valleys. They have on the same premises an *école paroissiale*, an *école des filles*, an *école infantine*, and an *école subsidiaire*. The last is a school in the winter months for those who are obliged to work for their living during the summer. We had a fine moonlight walk home, and enjoyed our evening meal.

We have divided cousin Anna Gurney's seeds into three parcels; one packet we have left at Pomaret with our good friend Lantaret, who, of all the people I have seen on the Continent, is one of the most pleasing—such Christian simplicity and sweetness of spirit; the other is for Bobbio; the third I have presented to a Vaudois gentleman near La Tour,

who is come into possession of a large property, and shows some taste for gardens and plants.

I hear very affecting accounts of the failure of the potato crops in some of the mountain *paroisses;* and it is to be feared that to some of the poorest of the Vaudois it will be a time of extreme suffering towards the latter part of winter: and, from the blight on the vineyards, the people in these parts cannot do much to help them. I am not sure but that I ought to try and get a little together for the relief of the most destitute.*

On the 20th, we went into the valley of Lucerne, and had a meeting in the school-house at Rora. The latter part of the way steep and mountainous. It is one of the Vaudois parishes, and our meeting was not large. We were hospitably entertained at the house of the minister. The young married couple manifested much openness towards us; and I trust it was so in reference to the religious communication I ventured to offer. We were late enough in our return, and I had rather a comfortless journey home; for a while above the clouds, and then in the cloud and below the cloud.

On First-day, the 21st, had a meeting at Villar, in the upper part of this valley, at which it was thought between six and seven hundred were present. The people were still in waiting, and the gathering so large that they had determined on opening the *église* instead of the school-house. On entering I was little short of amazed at the largeness of the congregation, and the quiet, settled and orderly demeanour of the people, and withal the place so dark I could scarcely see over it. The Moderator Revel kindly came over, and I believe that which I was desirous to bring before the people was plainly told them.

The next meeting was held at Bobbio. Here we were at the house of the Moderator Revel; a truly home-like, restful place, everything in great comfort, simplicity, and good order. Our meeting was held in their school-house in the evening; a

* He wrote to England on this subject, and the liberality of his friends came seasonably in aid of his efforts on behalf of the poor Vaudois.

goodly set of people, very attentive and open-hearted. We had a very comforting time together before we came away on Third-day morning.

On Fifth-day we had a meeting at Angrogne, and on the First-day afternoon in the same valley. The latter meeting was much the larger of the two: the people were orderly and attentive; and, on both occasions, I trust they had a good sense of that which I wished to communicate.

Our meeting at Prarustin the next day, will not very soon be forgotten by either of us. The people gathered in great numbers, as was the case at Villar. At the suggestion of the minister we made use of their usual place for worship. It is a large, lofty building; and being very poorly lighted—only two or three lights on a table in the centre of the house, it was, part of the time, not quite so settled as the meetings have generally been, which was quite a grief to our good friend Cantor, and to his kind-hearted, well-concerned wife, and to some of the more thoughtful of their neighbours. But I trust it did not to any great degree interfere with the service of the visit. I was helped through as much as on any other occasion, and was relieved and thankful after it was over.

With the exception of the *paroisses* in the upper part of the valley of St. Martin, we have now visited all the congregations of the valleys. I passed through much conflict of mind before I left that neighbourhood; but it seemed to be so much the opinion of W. H. and our friends, when we were there, that I had not power for the effort, that I yielded to their judgment.

Just as we were coming off from Bobbio, a young man came in from a village a few miles from Genoa, in which there has been within the last few months a remarkable religious awakening. Their little company consists principally of two families, of which two men and one young woman were sent to prison two or three weeks ago. I hardly know what was the alleged offence, but I presume some manifestation of secession from the Romish church. They were imprisoned in different parts of the same prison, and one of them confined under ground. Poor fellow! He said hey were willing to have made any sacrifice for their release,

and would have sold their shirts off their backs; but nothing would avail with their persecutors. Nothing affected me more than to hear of their being badly supplied with food, and but little of it; in my weakness it was about as much as I could bear to think of. The young man's history is very curious. They are, I suppose, a poor people living upon a very little. At certain seasons of the year, when their agricultural operations admit of it, they leave their homes upon the mountains and go round the country singing for their living. He came here two years ago, and attended the Italian preaching, and received a New Testament; and they date their enlightenment from that circumstance.

I do not expect that everybody will think me right in the little stir I am making about the destitute orphan children: it came before me in that way that I did not feel easy to turn it aside; but possibly something may come of it some day; and, if it be really needed, one or another may be found to carry it out.*

They are certainly a poor people; but there is that amount of native energy and talent, that, with the removal of their civil disabilities, if it should continue, I think they will rise and work their way in the world. Indeed, my fear is, lest,

* This has reference to the efforts he made towards the establishment of an orphan asylum for the Vaudois districts. He had been much affected on hearing of the number of destitute orphans in those secluded valleys; and, with his accustomed readiness to give a practical turn to his thoughts and feelings, he had taken great pains to interest others, and to enlist their exertions on their behalf. He did not live to see the fruits of these attempts; but an institution of the kind he contemplated was afterwards established by benevolent persons whose attention had been drawn to it. Jane Louisa Willyams makes the following allusion to it in her "Short History of the Waldensian Church," p. 316. "The late venerable William Forster had conceived the idea of an orphan asylum, and had even interested the hearts of many of his friends in the cause, when the Lord took him to himself."

Edward Baines, M.P. for Leeds, visited the institution a year later, 1855, and remarks, in his "Visit to the Vaudois of Piedmont," p. 65: "The orphan asylum contains eight pupils, and it is expected soon to accommodate sixteen. We understood that it originated in the suggestion of the late William Forster, the benevolent member of the Society of

with all their educational advantages, and what I believe to be their high standard of moral respectability, they should become worldly-minded and mixed up in the mass of Italian society; but I think there is much in the sincere endeavours of the professors of the college and some of the most influential of the pastors, to give their education a right direction.

12th mo. 5th. First-day. La Tour.—We have had a meeting this afternoon, appointed principally with the hope of seeing the people in the upper parts of this parish. It was a solid, attentive meeting; and I thought we were helped by a few words spoken with real feeling by the schoolmaster towards the close. I spoke of the Saviour's love, and of the work of the Holy Spirit in man's conversion; how it softens the heart and humbles us and helps us to live unto the Lord. The people separated in much quietness, and were loving and tender.

6th.—I endeavour to hold on from day to day, and often feel concerned that the day's work should keep pace with the day. I have never yet seen to the end of my labours in the valleys: there are times in which I have a trembling apprehension that this is not very near.

8th.—For the last four or five days I have been brought very low, not feeling myself at liberty to leave the country, and at the same time not seeing the way to further public service. At length I was brought to believe that, if, upon making the matter known to one or two of our friends, the way should open for it, I might find it to make for my more full release to be given up to seek for an opportunity in some of the principal Vaudois families in the town and neighbourhood. We went yesterday afternoon and laid the matter before Malan and his wife; they took the matter up with more cordiality than I could reasonably have expected, and

Friends, who gave pecuniary aid, and also sent liberal supplies of tracts and maps to the schools of the Vaudois."

From the latest accounts the institution continues in a flourishing condition, with a large increase of scholars; and liberal support from this country.

engaged to make out a list of such families as they considered would most meet with my wishes.

12th.—Those whom we visited at La Tour have received our visit with much cordiality; and as I have gone along from house to house, I have endeavoured, in much simplicity, and always in love, to communicate that which I have believed it my duty to utter. Our little *réunions* have been marked by much quietness, and the young people have manifested great seriousness and attention; strange as the thing must have appeared to many of them. I did not, in a single instance, see the slightest indication of levity or indecorum. We have seen some well-ordered families; and our friends, especially those connected with the college, are alive to the value of a good Christian education.

I could not but perceive that there was a willingness to promote the gathering of another public *réunion* at this place.

I think I have looked at the suggestion carefully, and not without a willingness to submit to it, if I should believe it to be laid upon me.*

The opportunities afforded for communication and conversation with their most influential men were much to my satisfaction, and did something towards opening the way for my departure with a quiet and peaceful mind, first with Revel, and Lanteret, and Cantor of Prarustin, principally on the orphan establishment, and in reference to a more general superintendence of their community, and an efficient Christian care towards their young people who come to Turin, and go forward to Marseilles and other parts of France: the idea was to a great degree new, and something possibly may be done.

The next evening we were a much larger company, all the professors of the college and several of the pastors. The time was principally occupied in considering the low state of education among the children of the peasantry generally. They admitted the inefficiency of the *Ecoles de Quartier*. A long and very interesting conversation ensued. There was a renewed

* The number of visits thus paid was about twenty-five. No meeting, as alluded to, was held.

complaint of the want of good elementary reading, such as they can conscientiously adopt; at present they have scarcely anything but the Testament for the youngest children. At length Professor Tron, one of their most useful practical men, undertook to prepare something adapted to their own peculiar circumstances in French; and I engaged to meet the expense.

Another object with me was that of circulating or itinerary schools for the summer months, that the children in all the different *hameaux* of each parish might have the opportunity of two or three hours' schooling twice or only once in the week. It led to considerable discussion; they thought that in some parishes it would be almost impracticable, on account of the children going with their parents to the pasture grounds on the Alps during the summer months; but they admitted that in two or three of the lower parishes it might be tried for their young men on leaving the normal school. I do hope the experiment will be made.

The normal school is only of a few months' standing; it has thus far answered greatly to their satifaction; but they complain of the inadequacy of their means to meet the expenditure; at present the professors are giving their lessons almost or entirely gratuitously. If a few pounds could be occasionally raised to pay a portion of the *pension* of some of the poorest of their young men, and to help them to buy a few articles of homely and necessary clothing, and in the purchase of stationery and school-books, it would be most useful and valuable.

I also adverted to the neglected state of the poor Vaudois children in the factories at La Tour; and tried to encourage them to the establishment of an English class in the college; both which objects are in the way of obtaining some attention.

As I thought that some of their people had not seen my certificates, I asked to have one of them read. I soon discovered that they were thinking of preparing something in return. I did not think it my place to prevent it, but I did request it might be in very moderate terms. I have received it, and though I have had it by me for some time, I have

never read it, and probably never shall. I do so shrink from the sight of my own name.

The conference was protracted to a late hour for them. Before we separated I was concerned to make some communication in the line of ministry. Revel interpreted; and we separated one from another in much love, and in a sweet feeling of Christian fellowship. Several of our friends came the next morning to see the last of us; it was altogether as much as I could bear.

Lantaret was our companion in the omnibus to Pignerol; he is a man worth knowing; much native power of mind, enlightened, enlarged, of remarkable humility and simplicity, and most prepossessing in his manners. He was a disciple of Neander, during his studies at Berlin, and seems to have partaken largely of his spirit.

Whilst thus busily employed in bearing the message of the Redeemer's love, by word of mouth, to the inhabitants of the valleys, both publicly and from house to house, William Forster did not neglect to avail himself of other means to promote the same object. Soon after arriving at La Tour, he had given orders for printing, as small tracts in Italian, 1,500 copies of his life of John the Baptist, in the words of the New Testament; 1,000 of the life of the proto-martyr Stephen: 1,000 of the "Lock and Key," by J. J. Gurney; 1,000 of a little tract called "Daily Bread;" and 2,000 of the "Discourses of our Lord," taken from the four Gospels. His leisure hours were also closely occupied in preparing a life of the Apostle Peter, compiled from the New Testament; and he had printed 2,000 copies of selected Psalms in French, and 2,000 in Italian. Of these publications packets were made up, and forwarded for the different schools, principally those called *Ecoles du Quartier*. His friend, Revel, the Moderator,

had kindly furnished him with a statement of the number of children in the Valleys, summed up in these words :—"*Ces* 4,762 *écoliers sont donc repartis dans* 170 *écoles primaires, sur une population d'environ,* 22,000 *Vaudois.*"

His Christian labours amongst the Vaudois now appeared to be concluded; and, in the course of a few days after the last date, he and his companions left for Turin. Here his friend William Holmes was unexpectedly called home, on account of the death of a near relative. He had been "a friend and companion remarkably suited to his need, and adapted to the occasion, kindly considerate of his infirmities, and his capability for exertion rendered him very helpful;" so that it was trying to W. F. to part from him.

On the 25th of Twelfth Month he writes from Turin :—

To his Son.

I hardly know whether the papers I send reach thy hands. I now send thee two of *L'Opinione,* of the 11th and 14th inst., which contain some particulars of the recent executions at Mantua; and I enclose an extract from the *Gazette del Popolo,* pretty much to the same effect. When I met the correspondent of the *Times* at Sir J. Hudson's, the other morning, he told me they would not accept his report, but possibly it may have been given by some other papers. The horrid account of the garotte and of the imprisonment, one would think, ought to find a place in the journals of every city throughout the civilized world. It was from the *Times* correspondent that I received the papers.

Sir J. Hudson, who is gone to the Island of Sardinia with General Fox, gave me a letter to San Martino, Minister of the Interior, to ask for an *entrée* to such of the public institutions of the city as I might wish to visit. I took it this

morning. Cavour, the newly-elected prime minister, was with him. Nothing hardly could be more kind and civil than my reception; and I am to have a letter of introduction sent to my hotel. I do not wish to go everywhere; but there are two or three places which I think I must visit—their Hospital for Incurable Diseases, which is what I have so much at heart for Norwich—and an experiment they are making of a Reformatory Prison for *Jeunes Detenus*, two or three miles out of Turin. They have no Blind Asylum, but a school for *Sourds et Muets*. Of course I did not stay long; but sometimes one gets at a good deal in a few minutes. Cavour is but a young man—more of a Dane than an Italian in physiognomy and complexion. He speaks English, and expresses himself in strong terms against the Tories at their Institution for *Enfans Trouvés*; but said that the people were not prepared for an alteration. In many respects, I imagine, the ministry are in advance of the nation. Their defeat on the marriage question, by a majority of one vote, is much felt by our friends. I do not suppose that the law, as it now stands, affects the Vaudois, but it is a sore grievance to the *nouvellement converti*; and, if we have a right understanding of the case, it is one of the pleas brought against the young Cereghini of Favale.* When they presented themselves to the priest, to bless their marriage, he refused to perform the ceremony unless they would promise not to read the Bible. They declined to do so, and he refused; and then they each declared in his presence that they took each other as husband and wife, which, it is said, is a marriage in Piedmont. But still the magistrates had the power to put them in prison; and there they are, and, as far as I can hear, are likely to continue. One's great hope is, that their hearts may not fail them.

I met, the other day, at our printer's at Pignerol, with a pamphlet on the Punishment of Death, recently published.

* See an interesting reference to these "Peasant Converts of Favale," —the Cereghini family—in J. L. Willyams's "Short History of the Waldensian Church." Second Edition, pp. 285—290.

As far as I can see it is plain-spoken and thorough-going. One thing was remarkable, that the author should have made so few references to English writers on the question; but then, again, I thought, who are they to whom he could refer?

They are publishing an Italian translation of Uncle Tom, in numbers; and I have met with two translations in French —"Le Père Tom"—illustrated by the engravings of one of the English editions; and "Oncle Tom" without engravings.

We have had a busy week. Jules has been diligent and worked hard. If thou could see our stock of books, thou would think we must have something on our hands to make a right disposal of them. I found such a dearth of books for the *Ecoles de Quartier* in the Valleys, that, after some thought, I took courage, and printed a large edition of "Selections from the Psalms" in French; and in Italian, "The Miracles of our Lord;" and, as my good friend, Professor Tron, has engaged to compile an *Abécédure*, or First Reading Book, without delay, I hope their schools in the mountains will be found to answer a better purpose than they have latterly done.

Everything wears the appearance of prosperity in Turin; and this I suppose to be the case in many parts of the country. In some districts in the plains the blight on the vineyards is a very serious calamity. Round Pignerol it was quite a melancholy sight—the bunches of grapes still hanging upon the vines not much more than half grown; and in some places they have made no wine at all. Silk is their staple commodity for export, and England their principal customer.

One of the Vaudois pastors has had a very late letter from Florence. There seems but little prospect of a release of the Madiai at present. He is in a very poor state of health, and Rosa Madiai is much enfeebled by her imprisonment.

Having left Turin, he proceeds with his narrative:—

1853. *1st mo. 9th. Alessandria.*—Yesterday I made a

long and interesting visit to the Penitentiary; 497 prisoners all employed, working at different trades; and earning one-third of their cost to the country, *tout compris*. It dates its commencement from 1846; and is an institution very creditable to their new form of government. I had letters from the Abbé Oporti; and from Cibrario, who is now Minister of Instruction, &c.; and was received with much openness and confidence.

I was much pleased with the Marquis Azeglio's schools; and just before I left Turin I made the acquaintance of Coichi, a monk at the head of a newly-formed *Société de Patronage*, to which he is much, and I have no doubt very usefully, devoted. He had lately made a tour in Switzerland, parts of Germany, and France, to visit their industrial establishments; and I was pleased to hear him say he thought the best of that near Berne, and the Protestant establishment in the neighbourhood of Strasburg.

I am thankful to say that at last I have made a disposal of all my stock of books, somewhere about 17,000; much to my own satisfaction. I have left some at Turin, and brought a boxful for Genoa. I made up a pretty large packet for Veroni, who is going, under the direction of the Italian committee in London, to labour among the Italians at Smyrna.

It may be found that there is a field for the labour of Friends in preparing and circulating Scripture-books in different European languages—Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish, Russ, &c. I want to get up two or three for the Armenians and Greeks at Constantinople. I do not think that Old Testament tracts for the Jews' schools (Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, &c.), would be labour thrown away.

I feel myself more than ever as in a strange land; but I try to cling to the hope that I shall be brought through it all. And if not, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, all will go well, which is best of all.

11th.—I have accomplished my visit to Casale with as little difficulty and suffering as I could have expected. Rocchetti and his wife gave us a friendly reception, and manifested much openness towards us. They are suffering annoyance

from their neighbours; and it was painful to be sensible of their apprehension of still further persecution; but they still hold their meetings, and are, I trust, maintaining their ground with uprightness and consistency. He is an *Avocat* of good education, speaks French with ease, and reads and understands English. It was not long before we settled into a little quiet *recueillement*, and I was glad to believe myself helped to minister a few words to their comfort, and for the renewing of their strength. We did not stay very long; and on leaving them I proposed coming again.

We were with our friends about eight o'clock this morning. They invited another family to meet us: it was a satisfactory visit; and after our breakfast I was enabled still further to minister, as I thought, to their encouragement and help. Jules interpreted for me, as usual, and Rocchetti followed me in Italian. The number of their little company is but small, and yet I think it wears something of the character of a church; though it is doubtful how long they may be permitted to hold together. The weather was warm and pleasant on our return; the road is one of much traffic just now, a great deal worn. Indeed, go where we may, town and country, we see a great deal of travelling, and the appearances of prosperity in trade and commerce. The country has very much the appearance of the plains of Lombardy, principally arable farms with plantations of mulberry, and some vineyards; hardly a garden to be seen all the way, and scarcely such a thing as a fruit-tree of any kind.

On their arrival at Genoa he resumes:—

1st mo. 12th.—Safe at Genoa, with a quiet and restful mind, and something not far remote from joy and thankfulness, in the hope that I may be allowed to regard it as a step toward home, though further away.

18th.—I have already seen several people; and I have the hope that I am in the way of my duty; it is a path of many humiliations, and certainly one that I should not have chosen for myself.

19th.—That which constitutes the life, the liberty, the peace, the hope, the righteousness and holiness and joy, and which is indeed the very glory of the gospel of Christ, is here under oppression; and, as it might seem, smothered by the smoke which arises from out of the bottomless pit. The sense of it makes me sorrowful, and prevents my enjoyment of almost every surrounding object. And in my low estate I am the prey of many fears; but it is not often that I am divested of some little capacity to stay my mind upon that which is unmoveable.

I have had some intercourse with the sort of people I had hoped to find at Genoa. The more I have seen of them the more I have to believe that the work is of the Lord.

Travelling in the midst of winter, and often with considerable bodily fatigue, William Forster was occasionally compelled to rest for a few days during this journey. He rallied, however, from one time to another, and was enabled to perform his allotted service. On reaching Nice, he writes on the 27th of the First Month:—

We have had a very favoured journey from Genoa, fine warm weather, beautiful moonlight night; the roads, for the most part, in good order; no torrents, in many instances the bed of the river quite dry. We have had a very full day; there are dear good people here, zealously affected towards the cause of Christ, and making effort and sacrifice for the spreading of the knowledge of the truth.

The road along the coast is one that I should think no traveller can forget. I often thought of Hudson Gurney's description of it when he called it the precipice road: certainly I have never met with so much unprotected precipice in any other country. I could not but wonder at the good training of the horses; it made one shudder at the circuit they made in turning the corner; but they always seemed to know what they were about, and, trotting down the steepest mountain,

there was not a single false step. The valleys are ri
in vineyards, groves, and woods of lemons and oranges, fi
of fruit and most beautiful, and olives growing everywhe
that they could be planted.

From Nice he proceeded to Languedoc in th
South of France, once more to pay a short visit
the Friends in those parts, before his return
England. Referring to his previous engagemen
he writes from St. Hypolite:—

2nd mo. 1st.—The more I saw of Geymonat, the Vaudo
minister at Genoa, the more I valued him. He is young an
fills a place of great responsibility there; and he feels it to b
so. After much serious thoughtfulness upon the matter,
believed it best to propose attending one of their *réunion*
When they had gone through their usual engagements, th
reading of the Scriptures and remarks upon them, Geymon
kindly made way for me, and interpreted into the Italia
what I wished to say. So far as I was able to judge,
thought he gave the people that which I was concerned
communicate as correctly as it was given by Jules in Frenc
It was a very interesting time to me; the people were ver
attentive, and I was relieved and comforted. They were ver
generally such as had come out of the Romish Church. O
another occasion Betti and his wife, Mazzarella, Niceto, an
Geymonat, came and spent an evening with us.

He held a meeting with the Friends at St. Hypo
lite, and one at Nismes, to which Friends came fro
Fontanaise, Congenies, and other places. In allusio
to the latter he remarks:—

I felt the weight of having brought friends together, but
trust there was no real ground to regret it. I thought it wa
probably the last opportunity I should ever have with Friend
in this country, and that brought a very solemn feeling with i

After this parting opportunity with a little company of fellow-professors for whom he had long cherished a deep Christian interest, he travelled without much delay to Paris, where he was pleased to meet his brother, Josiah Forster. They spent a few days together in the French capital, endeavouring to avail themselves of such opportunities as presented for promoting the cause of Christ, so dear to both; and then returned to England in safety and peace on the 17th of the Second Month, 1853.

On returning the certificate granted him for the performance of this visit in the Valleys of Piedmont, and other parts, William Forster entered, with his usual self-depreciation, into some details of the engagement, and alluded to the great openness of the people to receive the full gospel truths which he had to declare amongst them; how much he had been comforted by the serious deportment of the young people, especially in the family visits paid in some of the districts,—to them an entirely new mode of evincing Christian love and interest on their behalf. It was truly in a lowly spirit, disclaiming all merit to himself, and ascribing all the praise to God, that he produced the following testimony to his labours from the "Evangelical Church of the Valleys."

La Tour, Valleys of the Waldenses in Piedmont,
18th December, 1852.

BELOVED BRETHREN, MINISTERS, ELDERS, AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE BRITISH ISLANDS,

The ministers and other Vaudois Brethren in the Valleys of Piedmont, who have had the privilege of seeing and hearing the venerable brother, William Forster, who has come

amongst us, having your recommendations and your prayers, present to you their very serious brotherly salutation in Jesus Christ, our common Saviour. They beg you to receive the assurance of their cordial Christian love; and they ask for your prayers for the faithful performance of their duties to the Lord, who has kept and blessed them, and to men who have their eyes upon them, and who are acquainting themselves with the hope that is in them.

We cannot avoid assuring you that we have been abundantly refreshed, cheered, encouraged, and strengthened by the words and deeds of Christian love of our dear brother, William Forster. Our feeling is that it is certainly the Lord who has brought him amongst us; that his Spirit has kept and strengthened him, has put the thoughts into his heart, and the words upon his lips. He has visited the greatest part of our communities, has exhorted and encouraged them as the Lord has directed him.

On seeing this aged, venerable ambassador of Christ come amongst us, we have said with the prophet, "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth glad tidings, who publisheth peace, who bringeth glad tidings of good, who publisheth salvation, and saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."

This visit will serve, we at least hope, and we earnestly desire that it may, to establish a continual connexion between the evangelical Christians of these Valleys and the Friends of the British Islands; it will then contribute to the advancement of the love and edification which are in Christ.

We accompany this beloved and respectable brother with our prayers, our gratitude, and our deep Christian love.

May the Lord Jesus Christ be with his spirit. May grace be with you. Amen.

In the name of the brethren, the ministers, and the table of the Evangelical Church of the Valleys of the Waldenses in Piedmont. T. P. REVEL, *Moderator.*

So wrote the Christian "Men of the Valleys." It would be easy to multiply private testimonials to the

grateful appreciation of William Forster's gospel labours during this journey, as well as more recent evidence of the permanent blessing which appears to have rested upon them; but they are not needed. Than he, no one could be more ready to appropriate the words of the Apostle: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave unto every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God who giveth the increase." No one could be more ready than he to unite in the exclamation of George Fox: "We are nothing—CHRIST IS ALL!"

CHAPTER XLVI.

YEARLY MEETING IN DUBLIN—GENERAL MEETING IN EDINBURGH—YEARLY MEETING IN LONDON—PREPARATIONS FOR LEAVING HOME.

After his return home from his late engagements on the Continent, William Forster was often in feeble health; yet, with his wonted tenderness of sympathy for the poor, he did not cease to occupy himself, in caring for the alleviation of their sufferings, and the supply of their wants. As the spring advanced he regained a little strength, and in the Fourth Month he once more crossed over to Ireland and attended the Yearly Meeting in Dublin. Before he returned to Norwich he was also at the General Meeting held in Edinburgh.

After a short interval he again left home to attend the Yearly Meeting of 1853 in London. It was a time of peculiar interest and solemnity. In the opening sitting he was engaged in prayer. A friend afterwards wrote down his fervent petitions. They were as follows:—

We are deeply bowed before thee, O God, under a sense of what we are, and of thine infinite majesty. Yea, we tremble inwardly when we look at ourselves, and contemplate what we are by nature, and what we should have been through sin, had not the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to wash away our defilements, our transgressions, our sins,—our many and sad sins,—in his precious blood! These our sins—we

confess in trembling of soul and utter abasement our most unworthy condition—stare us in the face: but we pray that we may arise from this condition, and, as deeply humble and contrite penitents, cast ourselves on thy free mercy in Jesus, —and run to the fountain ever open for sin and for uncleanness, and thus be restored to thy favour, and a measure of thy holy likeness. Lord, look down upon this people; regard its poverty, its low estate; listen to thine elect who cry day and night before Thee. Have regard to those who weep before thine altar. And, Oh! we ask all help, all strength, all wisdom, all peace, all love from Thee, the inexhaustible fountain of all thy precious gifts. O, ever-glorious God, give us good hope, some soul-enlivening sense, that our sins, which are so many, have been washed away, have been cast behind Thee, no more to be remembered, for the sake of Him, our ever-living and sympathizing High Priest, the Lamb for ever glorified.

The part which he took in the subsequent proceedings of the various sittings of the Meeting was marked by his usual depth of feeling and unction. In the course of the deliberations he remarked:—

That he had thought of the disadvantages of those who live remote from the great body of Friends, and are thus deprived of the help and comfort of Christian fellowship. It was not easy for those not so circumstanced to estimate their own privileges. We had instances of some, so situated, who have eminently adorned their profession; yet many others had suffered loss. Such Friends have great disadvantages in training their young people; they know this; and yet they feel that they love the Truth; but they sink too low if they sink below faith in the power of God. May we give ourselves up to tender Christian sympathy one with another, as members of the same religious body. He longed with his whole heart for the increase of this fellowship within our borders. During the last few months he had been much detached from his friends, and was thus prepared more highly

to estimate his privileges. That which constitutes the spirituality and the glory of the gospel dispensation is to be enjoyed in silent, reverent waiting before the Lord. May Friends rightly appreciate their privileges, and live up to the light received, and come more and more to the practical part of religion—become trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.

Again he said on another occasion:—

Possibly it might be a word in season, if we were reminded of the practical Christian character of our holy religion, how it has been the means of building up the church,—and of marking the distinction there is between the church and the world. Words are not adequate to a full definition of all that is comprehended in that blessed word, grace. How much does it embrace of the love and mercy of God to the children of men, in bringing about their regeneration, and in preparing them for communion with Himself! We are, perhaps, too apt to think that there is something at our own command; whereas, that which can prepare us to live unto God, here and hereafter, is not at our command. It is of his grace!

The shortness and the uncertainty of life, the necessity of living unto the Lord, whilst opportunity is afforded, are great. O that that worldly-mindedness which is creeping in amongst us might be checked by our being brought to feel that we have not a home here; that we are in a state of pilgrimage the length of which is uncertain. Think of the large measure of unsanctified talent there is amongst us. If it were sanctified, to what a degree might this be the means of promoting the glory of God, and the good of others. The fields are whitening unto harvest,—there is the breaking-forth of light in various directions,—the Lord is at work among the nations of men. Many are quickened to a sense of that which is the very life and power of godliness. May we, as a Society, be prepared to take our part in the great work which the Lord is carrying on.

Among no nation or people is there a larger sense of that which constitutes Christian worship than among Friends. Let us cherish a sense of this, and be faithful and work while it is day. The working-hours of the day are but few, —the hours in which we may live unto the Lord upon earth, and work for Him, if we may be allowed the expression. As our leisure increases, if the fear and love of God increase also, it will be seen, that our leisure is a stewardship—that there is a danger of living to ourselves, and of lapsing into a love of ease and luxury.

To be truly Christians we must be so in trade and in commerce, in our families, and in religious society. There is that within us which is ready to check and reprove, and to point out the right way. We are not wrong in adhering to the Spirit of Truth; we are not right in neglecting it. It warns us in prosperity; it keeps us in adversity and under trials.

Imperfectly as these memoranda—made at the time—convey the exercise of William Forster's mind, they suffice to give some idea of what, in the evening of life, was the burden of some of his thoughts, on being thus assembled with his brethren. But the point of deepest and most significant interest, both as it regards himself and his friends, was the question of slavery and the slave-trade. In the course of the meeting the address which had been issued on that subject in 1849 on its behalf, was again brought under consideration. After mature deliberation, and the free expression of feeling, there appeared to be entire unanimity among Friends as to the right time having arrived for proceeding to present the address to those in authority in the United States of America. The final result was that, William Forster having offered himself to be the bearer of the address, he and three other Friends

were appointed by the meeting as a deputation for that purpose.

The opportunity was a memorable one, solemn and interesting. Several Friends were engaged in thanksgiving and prayer, both on behalf of the deputation and the great object in view, as well as for the body collectively. Under a renewed feeling of the same religious convictions of duty in which the concern had originated, the meeting adopted the following minute :—

During the four years which have elapsed since 1849, the address has been personally presented by special deputations on behalf of this meeting to most of the sovereigns of Europe, and to the Emperor of Brazil, * as well as to many others in authority in each of the countries visited by these deputations; and this meeting thinks it right gratefully to record its reverent sense of the Divine assistance which has been graciously afforded in the prosecution of that part of the service which has already been accomplished.

On seriously deliberating, in the fear of the Lord, upon that which may yet remain to be performed, of the religious duty laid upon us as a church in this matter, we believe that the time is come for presenting the address to the President and others in power in the United States of America. Under a solemn sense of the weighty and important character of the mission, we accordingly appoint our beloved Friends, Josiah Forster, William Forster, John Candler, and William Holmes, (of whom William Forster and John Candler are ministers of the gospel, and Josiah Forster and William Holmes, elders in our religious Society), a deputation to proceed to America, and present the address to the President and other members of the Federal Government, to Governors of States, and others in authority in that great Republic.

* The service in Brazil had devolved upon John Candler, of Chelmsford, and Wilson Burgess, then of Leicester; whilst in Portugal it had been undertaken by John Candler, and Robert W. Fox, of Falmouth.

We encourage these our dear Friends to proceed in the prosecution of the important duty confided to them, in such manner as, in dependence upon the wisdom that is from above, they may deem best; craving that the blessing of the Lord may rest upon the work in which they are about to engage, and commending them to the Christian kindness and consideration of those with whom they may have intercourse, and especially to the sympathy and help of our dear American brethren, members of our religious Society, who have so long laboured in the same righteous cause.

The clerk is directed to furnish the members of the deputation with a copy of the foregoing minute, duly signed by him on behalf of this Meeting.

Thus the subject of this memoir had felt constrained once more to devote himself to the service of the church, and its glorified Head, in the cause of humanity and universal freedom. In addition to this, soon after his return from the Yearly Meeting, he felt it to be his duty to inform the Monthly Meeting of a prospect of religious service in some parts of North America, which had long been before him.

His friends feelingly entered into the consideration of what he had then spread before them. They sympathized with him and his beloved wife; they felt much in the prospect of losing his society and his services of various kinds, both in the meeting and in the city; but they did not feel warranted to withhold their cordial concurrence and unity. They issued a certificate accordingly, addressed "To the inhabitants of some parts of the British provinces in North America, especially within the provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia; to Friends of New England Yearly Meeting, and to some of the

meetings of Friends in New York Yearly Meeting; and to some of the meetings in parts of Baltimore and North Carolina Yearly Meetings, particularly those in which Friends are surrounded by a slave population."

The following notice of the Quarterly Meeting held in the Seventh Month, 1853, kindly furnished by a friend who was present, is so interesting that it seems to claim a place here:—

The meeting gathered into a solemnity which deepened as the time passed on; there were several communications; one weighty and singularly appropriate from P. G. William Forster spoke of the value and beauty of serving the Lord while time was allotted us here; observing that, "blessed be God," there were moments when, even here, the sincere disciple and humble follower of Christ was permitted to feel the blessedness of serving such a Lord and Master.

When his concern was laid before Friends, I cannot find words to convey the depth of feeling which accompanied it, and which found an answer in the hearts of those who heard him. He alluded, with slow and faltering voice, to his own age and infirmities, the parting with his loved and affectionate wife. Many tears were shed; after a few minutes' pause, the bitterness of the sacrifice rolled off, as it were, and he gathered strength, as he proceeded, to lay before the meeting what he apprehended was required, desiring the feeling, unity, and judgment of his friends.

It was a season long to be remembered. A heavenly smile illumined his countenance; and though some felt as if they might never see his face again, yet, as they had no doubt that the Master called for him, they dared not withhold their consent; and with a most full, united, and sympathizing expression of sentiment set him at liberty.

The preparation of the life of the Apostle Peter, exclusively in the language of Holy Scripture, had

occupied some part of his time and attention. He was earnest to complete this little compilation, in order that, with others of a similar kind which he had prepared, it might be printed in the language of those countries in which the New Testament is not allowed to be freely circulated; and he hoped that this simple mode of diffusing divine truth would, under the Lord's blessing, do something towards the spread of the doctrines of life and salvation in those benighted lands. Writing on this subject to his young friend Henry Tuke, on the 24th of the Eighth Month, he says:—

I enclose two little Scripture books, which, to tell the truth, I put together under some little feeling of duty; and, with the hope, if my days should be prolonged, that I may be able to get them printed in some of the continental languages, for circulation where the volume of Holy Scripture is to a great degree, or, sad to say, entirely prohibited. I should have been glad to have got them and some others printed, before my departure, in Spanish and French—in French for the Roman Catholics in Canada and Hayti—and in the strong hope that I might find some channel open through which I could send the Spanish to Mexico, &c. I long to do something of the sort in Portuguese for Brazil, &c.

Give my best love to thy father, my dear and honoured friend. It is pleasant to think of the Christian fellowship which, in many times of deep suffering, I have enjoyed with him in that unity which is in the Truth, and nowhere else; and under the outpouring of the Divine anointing, as I believed it to be richly vouchsafed to him from above.

If at last, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, I am permitted to enter within the gates (and what a wonder of mercy that would be), it cheers my heart to think of meeting him, and thee too, my precious, tender child, where neither death nor sin, nor any other thing whatsoever, will separate us one from the other, nor from the presence of our Lord.

A few days latter he writes on the same subject:

To Anna Gurney.*

My dearest Cousin,—I have sent one of each of my little Scripture books, in English, for Samuel Carr, and should like, if I might, to send to some other of our good friends, Paul Johnstone, Arthur Upsher, &c. I have had them printed in English in the hope that I may have the benefit of the opinion of persons more competent than myself, upon those chapters (Peter v. and vi.) in which I have had to harmonize the narrative. I would send one to Dr. Cooper; but I hate to make a fuss about anything I have had to do with, especially with persons with whom I have had so transient an acquaintance.

Pray do so much as just to look at the chapters I have cut out of the Acts, in Armenian and Modern Greek. I am not without the hope that in America—if I get there—I may fall in with some return Missionary from the Levant, whom I may get to help me in the Armenian,—or rather to undertake

* To readers unacquainted with her history and character, it may be interesting to know that Anna Gurney was the daughter of Richard Gurney, of Keswick, near Norwich, brother of John and Joseph Gurney, the heads, respectively, of the Earlham and the Grove families. Her mother's sister was the mother of the Buxton family. Anna Forster's only sister, Sarah Buxton, who died suddenly at Bristol, while on a journey, in 1839, for many years after the decease of both their parents, lived under the same roof with her cousin Anna Gurney, at Northrepps Cottage. "Here," says a writer in the *Athenæum*, "these ladies passed lives of the purest and most active benevolence, and energetically devoted time and wealth, in partnership, to promote the welfare of the people around them. Miss Buxton was the leader. She was thus sketched by Miss Gurney:—

'In saddening memory's glass, that placid mien I see,
The eye which, speaking love to God, spoke tenderness to me;
The mind within the house of clay—intense, acute, and clear,—
Which poured a tide profusely round of blessings far and near.
The graceful form she wore on earth, so exquisitely frail,
The welcome winning smile that played around those features pale;
Thus fancy paints her as she was, that more than sister dear!
The cold reality returns, and all is lone and drear.'"

the matter; for I despair of ever being able to write or read a sentence in the language myself.

My brother has been down, and we have talked over the time of our departure. I think it will be either the 3rd of the Ninth Month, for Boston, or the 13th for New York. I must see thee again, if it can be so.

His farewell visit at Northrepps Cottage is spoken of by one who was present as a very memorable occasion :—

In the evening the party at Anna Gurney's was large, including Count G. from Italy, Dr. Cotton, the Dashwoods, Upshers, Carrs, &c. William Forster and the Vice-Chancellor sat together a good part of the evening, and seemed much to enjoy each other's conversation, which several times was made general. It was very interesting; there was so much openness, cheerfulness, and delightful feeling with all around, and William Forster was so loving and kind. In the morning, when the party were assembled,

Anna Gurney died in 1857, at the house of her brother, Hudson Gurney, at the age of sixty-one. "In consequence of an injury received from being let fall by her nurse, when a baby, she never had the use of her legs. But what she lost in bodily power appears to have been abundantly made up to her in mental endowments. She was one of a gifted family, surpassing most of them in intellectual attainments, and inferior to none in Christian benevolence, and, what is the strangest of all, even more than a match for the soundest and healthiest among them in personal activity, though unable through her whole life to stand or move without mechanical aid. Her intellect was of the highest order, and her acquirements as a linguist quite extraordinary; yet she was full of the warmest, brightest sympathy. Her conversation was not only delightful from its brilliancy, but from her ready perception of the wants and wishes of others. Not only was her wheel-chair propelled in a moment to her book-shelves when she wanted a volume to illustrate her thoughts, but the moment she caught a friend's eye in search of any article at a little distance, her chair was turned in that direction, and the object was presented with indescribable grace. She made young people exceedingly fond of her, entering with enthusiasm into their pursuits, and always willing and able, from her large fund of knowledge, to assist them. From her home at Northrepps Cottage she won, by her kindness

he read the 22nd chapter of Luke. Though he always read the Scriptures with deep feeling, and in a very striking manner, this was beyond all; and when he came to the 44th verse, he was so much overcome that he could hardly proceed. He afterwards addressed the company very impressively, and with unusual solemnity. On taking leave, he said to his cousin, "Anna, remember me in thy best moments; remember me at the throne of grace." It seemed so like a last parting.

The time of his departure now drew near. The following interesting account of his last days at home is taken from the memoranda of one of his sisters:—

It was on Seventh-day, the 20th of the Eighth Month, when I arrived at Earlham Road; my sister Sarah was there. Our brother met me with his usual kindness.

After meeting on the following day we called at the hospital, where he was a frequent visitor. He wished to see a poor German boy who had claimed his particular notice and care, and to give him some German books. The poor

and helpfulness, the strongest influence over the fisherfolk upon the coast, who regarded her almost as a superior being. At her own expense she procured a life-boat, and gun or mortar for throwing ropes over vessels in distress; and to secure the right use of these she would sometimes rise from her bed on stormy nights, when she could not sleep from sympathy with those upon the raging sea, and have herself carried down to the coast, three quarters of a mile off, to see that the men were at their posts, and to encourage them in their perilous duties. And, when half-drowned sailors were brought ashore, she remained to give care and directions for their treatment, or took them to her own home to have all needful attention paid to them.

Schools, the Bible Society, and the Anti-Slavery cause, with other objects of Christian philanthropy, received her warm sympathy and energetic assistance; while it was obvious that all this true-hearted consecration of herself and her means to the noblest purposes of Christian benevolence, sprung from, and was sustained by, vital faith in the Redeemer, and ardent love to his cause." See an interesting notice of her in the "Book of Golden Deeds."

seemed so pleased to see him, and to feel his kindness. He took such a lively interest in all the minute details of the hospital, that every thing which tended in the smallest degree to their comfort he thought worth his attention.

On Fifth-day we all went to meeting. He preached for some time, beginning with the words, "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." He very beautifully and instructively described the high privileges of those who did desire that their daily walk in life should be according to the will of their God; and who, having themselves experienced the exceeding preciousness of a Saviour's redeeming love and mercy, were earnest to follow his holy example and precepts, and to devote their hearts and lives to his service; earnestly setting forth the necessity of working while it was day, and that the Christian must redeem the time, not live unto himself:—"Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price:" pressing most affectionately, and urging upon those present not to allow the world and its many attractions to prevent them from faithfully serving their Lord—time at the most is very short—the longest life on earth but a short period. He dwelt upon the words, "He was not, because God took him;" and described the glorious inheritance, the heavenly rest, which is the portion of those who are translated from a life of faith on earth to the full fruition of glory in heaven; ending, in a most touching manner, with the words of Paul: "I commend you to God, and the word of his grace."

After meeting we went with him into the lowest parts of the city, to visit some of the many destitute who had excited his sympathy.

The last Sabbath, the 28th, the meeting was large. His preaching was very striking and touching. "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," were the words he began with; showing that the Gentiles were dead in trespasses and sins before the quickening power of the Holy Spirit came upon them; that they had received the glorious Gospel in its fulness; that each of us by nature is dead until renewed by the Holy Spirit, dead in trespasses

and sins. What would any of us be without this Spirit! He dwelt much upon its renovating power—how it renews the heart, changes the affections, gives a desire to live unto Christ, to devote all our sympathies, all our energies, to his cause. He beautifully and largely spoke of what Christ has done for us; that He had descended from the glory of his Father's throne, dwelt upon this earth, and borne earthly sufferings for us, and lastly an agonizing death upon the cross—that He had risen again and ascended into heaven, where He ever pleadeth for us as the living Intercessor. The high privileges which we have in the Gospel,—that we can none of us plead ignorance—but how this may again and again be sounded in the ears, without touching the heart, unless it be quickened by the Holy Spirit; but that this blessed experience had been known and felt by hundreds, and thousands, and tens of thousands, of all nations and countries. What a blessed thing to know that Jesus has ascended up to heaven, and there continually pleads for us with the Father, who hears Him always—dwelling much upon his offices as Intercessor, and upon the bright hopes of the Christian, and the highest privileges and blessings of the glorified saints. Many of his friends were around him after the meeting, to shake hands and take a last farewell; but any formal leave-taking he shrank from, as too much for his feelings.

It was a beautiful day, and we walked long together in the garden, much admiring his fine flowers and fruit trees, which he had had such particular pleasure in cultivating and pruning.

On the next morning we went to breakfast with Samuel Gurney, his wife, and daughter.

It was a very interesting time: S. G. read the fourteenth chapter of John; and then our dear sister Anna spoke with much feeling of the prospect of their separation; how tenderly she felt it, and how uncertain their ever meeting again; but how they had been helped through in former trials; and she desired to commit all into the hands of Him who would do all things for them.

After a few remarks from our dear brother, S. G. said, that

he did most fully believe that it was his duty to pursue the work; and he was earnest in every way to encourage him; though so hard to part, which he felt to be one of the greatest trials, yet he did believe they would be mercifully supported; he desired to leave all to Him who knew all, and who would prove their strong rock in all times of need.

The last thing we packed was the nice complete travelling case for letters and private papers; and which, as a lock-up case, was so needed. This contained various treasures, parting gifts of his friends, and many farewell notes, and other papers. But he never had the pleasure of these; for, before he left the station, it mysteriously disappeared, and all the contents, with much money, were lost. *

When parting in the evening he looked calm and peaceful, though he spoke but little. Our beloved sister had really cheered up and made great efforts, in trying to comfort him, saying she could reverently give thanks in the belief that all was right. He said, "I trust, my dear, thou wilt have no cause for uneasiness." The parting was a tenderly touching one. My sister followed him to the hall entrance, and took the candle to the carriage door, once more to look upon his countenance, which, she afterwards remarked, "was so sweet." This was the last time she saw him; "The Lord bless thee, my dearest!" the last words she said to him.

She sank much the next few days, when she seemed, at times, almost to realize the parting as final on this earth. She was comforted on hearing of the peace he had on his embarkation, when a most remarkable calm and holy feeling were granted; and we can believe that He who was thus calling him forth, was very near him, to calm, strengthen and comfort with his love and presence.

* Though every search was made immediately, they had the trial and mortification to hear the next morning, that it was found in a low part of Norwich, cleared of all its contents.

Again and again they heard with what cheerful submission he could speak of it, though so often missing it, and needing the much it contained.

CHAPTER XLVII.

LAST VISIT TO AMERICA.

PRESENTATION OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY ADDRESS TO THE PRESIDENT, AND GOVERNORS OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE little missionary band all met at Liverpool, and embarked together on board the *Canada* for Boston, on the 3rd of Ninth Month, 1853. It was touching to see the little group of Friends who had come to take a last leave of William Forster and his companions, gathered round them, and especially so to look on that devoted servant with his meekly subdued, apostolic countenance—holding his son's hand in his to the very last moment of the vessel's steaming away, with a look of parental tenderness more eloquent than words could be. It was a scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. It attracted the notice of the passengers around, who were evidently struck with the quiet solemnity of the parting.

The voyage was rough for the season of the year, but the deputation reached Boston in safety on the 15th. They were met, on landing, by their kind friends Robert J. Murray, and Mahlon Day, of New York; Marmaduke C. Cope, of Philadelphia; Samuel Boyd Toby, of Providence; Stephen A. Chase, of Salem; Samuel Boyce, of Lynn; and John D. Lang, of the State of Maine; by all of whom they were cordially welcomed to their native shores.

William Forster and his brother went forward to Providence; whilst their companions proceeded to New York. Accompanied by S. B. T. and R. J. M., W. F. attended a meeting a day or two after at Smithfield, in the country, of which the latter writes:—

In the meeting W. F. was instructively and sweetly engaged in the ministry. He spoke first of our condition as men, of our need of a Saviour, and of the glorious provision made for our redemption and salvation through Jesus Christ; setting forth briefly, but very forcibly, the whole Gospel plan. He then referred to those in former time, unto whom God had granted their request, but sent leanness into their souls, dwelling at length on the necessity of practical righteousness. In conclusion he expressed to the little company that he believed it was right for him to have been with them, feeling that there was a little legacy of love due from him to them.

In the course of the following week the four travellers again met at Burlington. Here William Forster found a congenial home, and a refreshing resting place at West Hill, the residence of his dear and valued friend Eliza P. Gurney; and they all much enjoyed their visits to Stephen and Rebecca Grellet, Richard Mott, and other kind friends. Before quitting Burlington they had an interesting parting opportunity at Stephen Grellet's, during which "William Forster in much love addressed those present, and especially handed the word of encouragement to his dear old friend and fellow-labourer in the Gospel." They had long known and loved each other, and had often met before, both in Europe and in America, in the service of their common Lord. The veteran soldiers of Christ now parted to see each other's faces no more, till, united by those bonds

which "death renders indissoluble," they should again stand side by side amidst all those to whom God hath given the final victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The deputation then proceeded to Philadelphia, where the two brothers took up their quarters at their long-tried friend Thomas Evans'. They spent a few days in the city in Christian intercourse with many beloved friends, and went out on Seventh-day evening to Thomas Wistar's, and attended the meeting at Abington the next day. The following notice of W. F.'s communication in that meeting has been kindly furnished by a Friend who was present:—

> It was the real, true, living Gospel—the atonement that has been made for us—the precious price of the blood of Christ that has redeemed us—the richness and the largeness of the grace to which we are called. It seemed as if we might all have been his children, gathered around him in his own parlour, his words were so full of persuasion and love. Over and over he impressed on us that to this the Lord has called us—to this the Lord would bring us—to eternal glory through our Saviour Jesus Christ. "And O, my dear brethren," said he, "let us look to it, that we who are called receive not the grace of God in vain." Then, pausing, he repeated, more earnestly, as though such precious truths could not fail to win all hearts: "For to this the Lord has called us; to this the Lord would bring us, to eternal glory, through our Saviour Jesus Christ."

After this little tarriance in Philadelphia and its neighbourhood, the deputation passed on to Baltimore; and, having been refreshed among their beloved friends in that city, they proceeded to Washington, there to begin the arduous service which had been confided

to them. In that service William Forster, besides his labours as a minister of Christ, took so prominent and important a part that, though it can hardly be matter of surprise, it must be felt to be cause of regret that scarcely anything relating to it, written by himself, has been met with; for no other hand can give the characteristic features of his own memoranda; and they would have had a special interest and value in connection with this his last labour of love and work of faith, in the cause of his Redeemer, and the service of his fellow-men. The pen of his faithful brother and fellow-helper in the Lord, has, however, supplied some of the deficiency, and to him, chiefly, the reader is indebted for the following particulars:*—

10th mo. 1st. Seventh-day.—We had an interview with Franklin Pierce, the President of the United States, at the Government house in the city of Washington; he received us affectionately and courteously. My dear brother introduced our errand, speaking of the long-felt interest of the Society of Friends in the termination of slavery and the slave-trade; and of the extended circulation of the address in Europe and in the Brazils. The President made some remarks on the present and more recent state of the question in the United States, and took a discouraging view of the prospect of an early termination of slavery amongst them. He recognised the concern of Friends as a religious one, and did not regard our coming as an interference. He encouraged the visit to the several governors as a likely means to carry out the concern, reminding us, as a reason for this, of the independence of the several States. The pressure of his duties as president would not allow of our reading the address. It was remarked to him that we had not much to do with

* The additional information has been kindly furnished by John Candler.

slaves, but with slaveholders, and that we wished to pursue a quiet course. He appreciated this, believing it would facilitate our object. After expressing a belief that, if there was a sincere looking to our Father in Heaven, a way would open to terminate the system, we withdrew.

On First-day they held their meeting for worship at the hotel, and were joined by a few others. In the afternoon they visited a *coloured* school at Dr. Butler's episcopal place of worship, the number who usually meet there being about 200. William Forster addressed the company briefly, but with much earnestness. Their next object was to obtain an interview with Joseph Johnson, the Governor of the State of Virginia. J. F. continues:—

10th mo. 3rd.—We left Washington, and travelled to Richmond in Virginia. On inquiring for the Governor, we found that he was on his plantation in a distant part of the State; we therefore retraced our course, and went by Baltimore and Cumberland to Bridgetown.

We were glad to learn that he was at his farm, about half-a mile out of the town. We went there, met with him, and he received us civilly in his own parlour. My brother soon mentioned to him our errand; he seemed to know but little of Friends. He very soon gave us to understand that slavery is a subject on which the Virginians are extremely sensitive; they are averse to external interference, thinking that others have done much to unsettle them. At the same time he accepted the address, and would give it his serious attention. My brother asked leave to read it, and he was allowed to do so. I felt that it spoke many home truths very plainly, but he heard it patiently, and we hope it made an impression. He spoke of many who would be glad to liberate their slaves if they knew how: but what could they do with them? admitting that in the abstract the truths were those to which he could subscribe. He condemned the African slave-trade;

but he was reminded that there is an internal slave-trade in the United States. He remarked that it would not do for the editor of a newspaper to print the address in Virginia, or for a minister to announce it from the pulpit; the dearest rights of the people are bound up in the subject of slavery. We replied we had no thought of doing such things. It was not for us to attempt to dictate; we wished them to do the right thing, believing that if there was a sincere looking to the Lord for help to terminate the system, a safe course of action would be seen. We commended the paper to his serious reflection and to the divine blessing, and left him.

They now proceeded to Ohio to see the Governor of that State, William Medill:—

10th mo. 9th.—We attended the meeting at Mount Pleasant in Ohio, in which W. F. spoke not long, but instructively, on the uncertainty of life, the certainty of death, and after death the judgment. "What is your life? it is but a vapour," inviting to earnestness in seeking for a well-grounded interest in Christ, and in serving Him upon earth.

After the reading of a chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews in the evening, in a Friend's family, he spoke of the great value of that portion of Holy Scripture; contrasting the law, which, however, was of divine authority, with the gospel; inviting all to embrace the latter in its fulness, its preciousness, and its purity. I am often taught by the enlargement of his mind, his love to the Redeemer, his modesty in speaking of his own attainments, and by his sense of the greatness of that mercy which is in Christ.

13th.—We saw the Governor of Ohio at Lancaster in that State. We were with him above an hour: he listened to the reading of the address with much patience. He fully admitted the advantage of slavery being abolished in this State, and says that public opinion is against it, and that it is excluded from the State in perpetuity. But popular prejudice is strong against the people of colour; insomuch that a white man, because he had married a woman of colour, was not allowed

to vote, though he had as much right to do so as the governor; but law kept him away from the ballot-box. So much for true American liberty!

He told us that, both morally and politically, he is opposed to the system, but sees no way for its termination. We urged that it is unwise to come to this conclusion. He thinks the interests of the people of the South are so much bound up in the question, that it must be left to take its course. This is a sad way of treating an anti-christian mode of conduct; it is the principle that that which is just and right must give way to policy and expediency.

16th.—We attended the meeting at Cincinnati; about 200 present. My dear brother spoke at length on the great privileges of the gospel now placed within our reach. These are not to us the days of ignorance. To us the darkness is passed, and the true light now shineth; earnestly appealing to all, each to be alive to the great business of life, to open the heart to the working of the Spirit to effect this; pressing upon us the interests of eternity rather than the pleasures of this life; and adverting to these days of outward prosperity.

Crossing over into Kentucky they had an interview with Lazarus W. Powell, the Governor of the State:—

18th.—Saw the Governor of the State of Kentucky at Frankfort. He received us very agreeably, heard the address patiently, and was courteous and mild. In conversation he told us that the value of slave property in this State is seventy million dollars; upwards of 100,000 slaves in a population of one million. Like others, he agreed with us on the African slave-trade; which caused us to remind him of the internal slave-trade. I understood him to say that their laws forbid the introduction of slaves from other states, and that they do not forbid the teaching of them to read or write, though but few are so taught. Some of the inhabitants are for the abolition of slavery, others against it. It was pressed upon him to give

the subject an attentive consideration, and we parted friendly, with an acknowledgment on our part of his kindness.

Returning to Cincinnati they visited the Refuge for Juvenile Offenders in that city, and found much to interest them in the arrangements and management of that institution—schools, workshops, religious instruction, diet and lodging, all presenting a reformatory character—tending to improvement. William Forster addressed the young people seriously and affectionately. On their way to Indianapolis to visit the Governor of the State, Joseph A. Wright, they spent First-day at Richmond, and were kindly entertained at their friend Elijah Coffin's.

23rd.—At a large meeting on First-day at Richmond, W. F. spoke at some length. "One thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see." There are many here, he said, who can recur to their spiritual blindness, feeling that they now see in the light of the Lord. In the language of sympathy and comfort, he encouraged such to hold fast steadfastly to the end—warning others, on the solemn consideration of the two states, the carnal and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly, seriously to consider, as in the cool of the day, on which side of the line they are.

26th.—Saw the Governor of Indiana at Indianapolis. He received us with openness, and listened to the address with attention, telling us of their assisting in sending free coloured people to Liberia. Our case was pressed upon him rather urgently. Though Indiana is a free State, men in office have opportunities, in the use of moral, peaceable, Christian arguments, to plead the cause of the slave.

After this interview the Governor pressed the friends of the deputation to spend an evening with him at his private residence, which they gladly agreed

to. They had much interesting and animated conversation, and the visit closed with a time of religious retirement. William Forster addressed the governor, who had lately lost his wife, in a touching strain of fervent Christian regard, expressing a desire that all his sorrows might be sanctified to him, and that a blessing might attend him and his sister, through time and eternity. The company parted under feelings of regard and love to each other; and there appeared reason to hope that good had been the result of the evening's intercourse.

Leaving Indianapolis they visited Bloomfield, and had a long journey afterwards to Joliet, the residence of Joel A. Matteson, the Governor of the State of Illinois. J. F.'s narrative thus proceeds :—

30th.—Attended the meeting at Bloomfield, which was large and a time of solemnity. W. F. was enabled, in much love and earnestness, to declare vital and all-important practical Gospel truths, testifying to the blessedness of being made to feel the burthen of our sins, and of being brought to true repentance on account of them, and to lay hold of that redemption which comes through the Lord Jesus; dwelling upon the universality of the love of God in Him, of which every one may partake, inasmuch as He died for the whole world in the boundless mercy of the Father's love. When speaking of the experience of the true believer, he reverently adverted to the blessedness of knowing the Father and the Son, to take up their abode with the true followers of the Lamb.

11th mo. 3rd. Springfield, Illinois.—There are in this city several families from Madeira. They were persecuted on that island on account of their renouncing the errors of Popery. Dr. Kalley laboured much and effectually among them. They emigrated to Trinidad, and are now come here. An opportunity presenting to meet them this evening, we availed

ourselves of it, and went. They were assembled for religious worship, and occupied the lower room of the Presbyterian meeting-house. One of them, a deacon, was engaged in prayer when we entered. My dear brother afterwards addressed them at some length in the language of encouragement and thankfulness on their behalf, for the light that had been granted them: it was practical and evangelical. In much reverence of spirit he engaged in prayer for them and for us all, alluding particularly to their children, praying that the parents may be helped to train them aright. The deacon afterwards gave the substance in Portuguese. He is an elder among them, about twenty-two years of age, learning the trade of a shoemaker. They came with much warmth of feeling to shake hands with us. I think about 120 were present. It was an interesting visit to our comfort.

5th. We saw the governor of the State of Illinois, at Joliet. He very frankly allowed an opportunity to read the address to him, the humanity of which he acknowledged. He was urged to use his influence with his associates in life and in political affairs, and to enforce the principles of the address. He told us, if we wished it, he would introduce it to the Legislature: this we encouraged. He fully admits the wrong of slavery, and the evils of it upon the slave-owner and his family, such as he had witnessed in the slave States. When a senator in their Legislature, he introduced a measure to make a grant for schools for the coloured people, and to assist them to go to Liberia. It was carried in the Senate, but lost in the other house. We pressed upon him the elevation of the character of this class. For four or five years during the agitation of this question, their Legislature advocated the admission of no more slave States into the Union, and urged it upon their representatives in General Congress.

Their work at Joliet being done, they proceeded on their way to Wisconsin to seek an interview with Leonard J. Farwell, the Governor of that newly-formed State.

11th mo. 6th. Chicago.—We held our meeting this morning. My brother's communication was much to my comfort, on waiting on the Lord for the renewal of our strength. "My soul wait thou only on God." It was practical in its character, turning us to prayer—to the remembrance that we have a race to run, a conflict to maintain, and pointing to that hope in Christ which the Gospel sets before us.

10th. Madison.—We came forward, travelling through Wisconsin to this city, the residence of the Governor of the State, and saw him at his country house, a few miles from the city. He listened patiently to the address. We urged that, as this is a free State, his influence might be extended beyond its limits. We spoke of the feeling of our Friends at home in issuing such a paper and sending us so far, and that on purely Christian principles. He had travelled much in Europe, in England, and in Ireland, a few years ago, and heard so much against American slavery that it had touched him, and he was determined to exert himself. In his opening address to the Legislature he protested against the Fugitive Slave Law. He was visited again the next day, and manifested a continued interest in what had brought us together.

11th.—In the course of yesterday afternoon my dear brother said that he had thought much about a public meeting in this place. The meeting was held this evening. It was a quiet time; before anything was said there was a stillness which was to be prized. He was helped to speak with much clearness and force on the uncertainty of life, and on judgment after death; on the two great classes, the righteous and the wicked, bringing these solemn truths home to each individual; dwelling also on the universality of the love of God in Christ; feelingly calling the attention of all to the warnings and convictions of the Holy Spirit; to the need to all to be born again, directing us to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and pressing upon those present the need of bearing the cross and of self-denial, a doctrine too little thought of by the professors of religion at this day, but by which, he believed, according to the language of Christ, we shall be judged at the last day.

He engaged afterwards so reverently, and, I trust it may be said, in such power, both in praise and prayer, that we had cause to feel thankful that the meeting had been held.

We now turned southward, returned to Chicago, and, traversing the wide prairies of Illinois, we crossed the Mississippi from Alton to St. Louis, and arrived there on the 16th of the Eleventh Month. During our tarriance in that city my dear brother printed an edition of 1,500 copies of the "Lock and Key," by J. J. Gurney; giving orders for sending them in packets to schools in Illinois, in Iowa, and in this city, and taking other copies for distribution in the Southern States. We went about forty miles westward, on the way to Jefferson city, by railroad; but my dear brother felt so run down in health and unequal to exertion, that he relinquished the remainder of the journey thither. John Candler and I, therefore, went forward by the stage, and, after a comfortless journey of twenty-four hours, on rough roads, through a wilderness country, and being ferried over several rivers, we arrived at the city, near the banks of the Missouri river.

The interview with Sterling Price, the Governor of Missouri, obtained by Josiah Forster and John Candler, is next adverted to:—

22nd.—We obtained an interview with the Governor of Missouri. He kindly granted us liberty to read the address. I felt the home-strokes which it contained. He asked at the close what we intended to do or proposed as a remedy. He was told it was not our business to presume so much; we left that with them, and believed a remedy would be found, if rightly sought for; whilst we saw the case encompassed with difficulties, and sympathized with them. He said Great Britain had inflicted slavery on them. It was replied, when the American Colonies threw off the yoke, they could have terminated the system; but that we thought it well to look forward and not backward. He spoke of some States that had already set free their slaves; and that in past years Virginia, Maryland, and Kentucky were about to terminate slavery, had not other States

interfered; here again we urged attention to the future. He spoke of some ministers of the Gospel who openly advocated slavery. We asked for a candid, serious meditation upon the address, and its scriptural argument, and pressed this upon his conscience. He spoke of the intelligence of his slaves. It was remarked the more the intellect is exercised, the more galling is the yoke of slavery found to be—for the love of liberty is inherent in man as his faculties are developed. The subject was calmly treated on both sides, and we came away acknowledging his kindness. A copy of the "Life of John Woolman" was given him.

We went early to rest, expecting to depart before three in the morning. Before midnight the address and the book were returned, and a letter stating that he was not satisfied with us or our views. On the 25th we returned to St. Louis.

Having rejoined their companions, J. F. resumes:

27th.—We held our meeting for worship, as usual, this forenoon; the use of a separate room was kindly granted us at the Monroe hotel; nine sat down with us. Some had been members with Friends, and others were their connexions. My dear brother had an instructive communication on the character of true religion; that, whatever be our profession, its great efficacy is to bring to a change of heart in all, to give new affections, and to establish in Christ, and that without this experience there is no true religion; bearing testimony also to the work of the Spirit, to which he appealed as having been felt in days past; and speaking of living out of the spirit of the world, to which the Holy Spirit would bring men, thus causing them to lead practical, holy lives.

Before we separated he engaged feelingly and reverently in prayer, earnestly begging for the forgiveness of the sins of all present, that these may be washed away in the blood of Christ, and that we may all so live under the government of the Spirit, as that when called, one by one, from this state of being, and brought to the judgment-seat of Christ, we may stand at the right hand.

12th mo. 7th. Baton-rouge.—We landed here soon after noon to-day, after a passage of upwards of seven days on the Mississippi river, having come, by computation, nearly 1000 miles (including the windings of the stream), on that noble river.

We had slaveholders on our passage down, who came on board for a time and then landed. My dear brother had some friendly, serious conversation with several of this character, in a mild and quiet manner, when they were very free and open in their remarks, and he availed himself of the occasion, to express in a Christian spirit, reflections on the system itself which, I believe, would not be lost.

It is a fine afternoon; we have rode out to a sugar farm. The plants in the field were of a light green, grateful to the eye, with long thin leaves like those of flags; the cane six or eight feet high. It was the time of cutting. The teams were going to and fro in the lane to the boiling house; they use long open wagons drawn by four mules. In the yard of a large, well-managed estate, the boys appeared happy, and merry, and were singing together; throwing lengths of the cane into a long trough, raised by machinery to the boiling-house into which it was conveyed. The whole brought to mind the expression, "the joys of harvest;" but, alas! what a contrast to this does the knowledge of the fact present, that we were in the very midst of slavery. I think we were told it was a farm of 600 acres, upwards of one-half sugar. A quiet man with whom my brother conversed, gave him the idea of much wickedness in the place.

They now passed some time with P. O. Hebert, the Governor of Louisiana:—

8th.—We had an interview with the Governor of Louisiana. My dear brother calmly and suitably introduced our errand to his notice. It did not seem desirable to attempt to read the whole of the address. When we arrived at this expression, "The law allows nothing but hopeless, helpless, friendless misery," the Governor interposed, wishing to show us how

his own slaves could look for something better, and speaking of his own conduct in buying at a high price a slave of a family when sold at public auction on the death of his parent—and also of an open sale, where he had prevented the sale of a child under ten years of age.

Some pains were taken to convince him that it is principle that is spoken of in this paper, that, though he bought the slave, the law thus condemned him; and that though Louisiana does not allow of the separation of children under ten years of age, other States do. He spoke of England having entailed slavery upon America, by introducing it before the declaration of independence—of the unfitness of slaves for freedom—of their content in their allotment. At the same time, he admitted the whole thing to be an evil. He alleged many exemplifications of the poor being worse off in our own country, in Ireland, and in France; this he had witnessed on a recent tour in Europe. He was at the same time desirous of doing full justice to the motives which indited the paper, and of acknowledging that it applied to principle. We took pains to convince him of the sympathy we felt for the slaveholder. He said, were he to set his slaves at liberty to-morrow, he should be a ruined man.

I am ready to think he felt some convictions on hearing some home truths, which he attempted to suppress; and that he was tried, what if I say irritated; and yet he was careful not to show it. He thought slavery must terminate when slaves are no longer of value; and that emancipation must come from the States themselves. The retrospect of the day distresses me. I am brought to feel the complicated evils of the system, its deep-rooted character, entwined into the minds and habits of the people from their very infancy; and yet it must give way, though I see not how.

General Foote, the Governor of the State of Mississippi, allowed them a long interview:—

12th. Jackson.—We were nearly an hour with the Governor of Mississippi. He received us courteously. My brother

explained our errand—I read the address. He asked at the close what our object was. It was replied that we had very much fulfilled our commission: we commended its contents to his best feelings; and desired it might have his calm, serious thoughts in his private moments, in the fear of the Lord. He spoke in full terms of the Christian love of the address, and of the purity of the motive in which it was issued; but that we were mistaken, being ignorant of the real state of things amongst them. He then entered at some length into a representation of "the happy state of the slaves, well-fed, well-clothed, well-cared for, taught the truths of the Gospel every week." He did not believe there was a happier peasantry anywhere on the earth. They could hold property, and lived as well as their owners. He strongly urged that if set at liberty they would be degraded and indolent, and in the course of two or three generations would relapse into barbarism; and yet he told us that when his old nurse was liberated by his mother, she lived happily as a servant with her; but this he said was an exception.

He had intended to introduce into his speech about to be delivered to the Legislature, some ameliorating clauses, but the excitement in the State led him, by the advice of his secretary and some of his friends, to desist. He had thought to propose that children should not be sold from their mothers under a certain age—that husband and wives should not be sold separate—that sales by auction should not take place, and only private transfers be allowed; but "such had been the violence of the northern abolitionists that he had been deterred." We parted very friendly. As we went to the State-house, we found drawn up in front sixteen men and boys, fifteen young women and girls, standing under the railing, dressed in their best attire. We were told they were there for sale, brought thither by a jobber from Virginia. The Governor said, had he the power, he would put an end to such sales.

From Mississippi they proceeded to Alabama, and paid a visit to Henry W. Collier, the Governor of that State:—

16th. Montgomery in Alabama.—After travelling three days and three nights successively, by computation nearly 300 miles, we reached this place yesterday afternoon and saw the Governor of this State. My dear brother read the address, to which he listened with attention. He said "it was an admirable paper," at the same time acknowledging that he held slaves himself, but would not sell them on any consideration whatever: they came to him as a patrimony. He has one slave on an estate a few miles off, for whom he would not take 20,000 dollars: he highly values him, as a trustworthy servant, and a truly religious man, as he believes. The children of his slaves are taught to read with his own children; and go to a "Sunday school." He has been a teacher in one himself. Had he to begin life again, it certainly should be without slaves. He thinks they are better treated every way than they formerly were; and admitted that the relation between master and slave must in some way be altered. On its being suggested to him what may be the condition of his slaves on his death, he said he had confidence in his wife if she survive; but that it was a subject on which he often thought seriously, and so did many others.

I remarked that, whilst we did not wish on a single point to depart from the purport of the address, we had been brought more than ever, since coming to this country, to feel the difficulties of the slave-owner.

He fully admitted the cruelty of selling children away from their parents at a tender age, of separating husbands and wives; and called our attention to something he had said in his address to their Legislature, of which he gave us copies. My brother urged upon the importance of acting up to the light imparted, in order to have a still clearer sight: this I think he felt. He condemned the rooms in this city for the sale of slaves, of which we had seen three in walking about the town. The Governor admits that the slaves are rising intellectually; and says, that thousands are interested with him in the introduction of a different and better state of things.

On my brother's saying to a man he met, that he hoped

his children had some education, he replied, "I give them good advice when they leave me; but I have six sons and they have all been sold away from me." What an illustration of this unrighteous system!

The Governor of the State of Georgia, H. V. Johnson, readily granted them an interview:—

12th. mo. 20th.—We saw the Governor of Georgia at Milledgeville; he received us very civilly. My dear brother, with great courtesy and in a quiet manner, told him our errand before presenting the address. He allowed it to be read. I thought he felt its length and its force as we went along. He said, at the close, it was a pathetic paper and well written. He admitted the mildness of its character; but he thinks they understand their own position far better than strangers can. He has studied the question carefully, as many others have done, and thinks slavery not a sin, or contrary to the Divine law—that it was allowed by Christ, still more so by the Apostle Paul, and countenanced in the decalogue. He dwelt much on the happiness of the slaves, the kind treatment of them physically, and spoke of their clothing, their dwellings, and their religious instruction on First-days. He adverted to the whole system as having been entailed upon them by Great Britain; spoke of West India emancipation as a failure, and only resorted to when the islands proved unproductive; dwelt on the miseries of our poor in factories and in mines; that the improvement of the negroes is gradually going on; and that, if let alone, slavery may end in time, and the negroes be settled in the western countries as freemen; but that, if immediately set at liberty, they would be lazy and depraved, and in a few generations relapse into idolatry. We endeavoured in a friendly spirit to reply to his observations as he went along, but there was no reason to think that conviction was wrought.

They were next admitted to an audience by John L. Manning, the Governor of South Carolina:—

12th mo. 23.—We saw the Governor of South Carolina Columbia; he received us at the Capitol. My brother sp of the course Friends had taken in the Southern States years past, giving liberty to their own slaves, adding, the slave-trade and slavery had long been subjects of c interest with our religious Society. The address had b adopted in 1849; it had been circulated in Europe and in Brazils, and now we were come with it to America. soon told us that he is one of the largest slave-owners in State; but in a gentlemanly manner consented to hear address. It was read, and my brother tenderly commen to his best feelings the condition of his slaves after his de He told us he is a communicant of the Episcopal Churc his slaves are catechised every evening, and receive religi instruction every First-day. He possesses sugar plantati in Lousiana, and should be glad to let us see them, giving fully to understand that he feels no compunction as a sla holder. He was requested to keep his mind open to c viction, if at any time different views should present; and was added that much sympathy with the slaveholders h been awakened in our minds. He seemed pleased to h this, and remarked that under his governorship the condit of the slaves had been meliorated. We knew we were in State in which the slaves bear a very large proportion to t whites. We assured him that we had passed along very ca fully, avoiding to speak of our errand: he expressed l satisfaction at this, saying he did not believe twenty men the State would have listened to us as he had done. It w remarked to him that it is for the separate States to ame their own laws; and yet foreigners are at liberty to comme in a right spirit upon what they think to be wrong. To th he seemed to assent. From his remarks we inferred that l feared insurrection if publicity were given to our erran We told him that our business was with the governors, n with the slaves.

The Governor of the State of Tennessee, Andre Johnson, received them kindly:—

Nashville. 12th mo. 28th.—We went this morning by appointment to the Governor of Tennessee. When told the object of our visit, and the course Friends in North Carolina had adopted in slavery, he gave us to understand that he does not entertain ultra views on the subject, and freely allowed the address to be read. He seemed to listen with calm unmoved attention,—that self-command and fixed determination of purpose, that unmoved countenance, which has seemed to me to mark the American character of independence. He entered into a friendly discourse on many parts of the address. He stated that a law was passed in Tennessee about the year 1832, after the insurrection at Southampton, in Virginia, which law prohibited the slaves remaining in the State after being set at liberty, but that it is not enforced with great strictness. He did not enter much into the merits of slavery; and I doubt whether it is a subject on which he has bestowed much thought. He holds four slaves, whom he purchased for domestic servants. He says there are many coloured people in the town who attend places of worship and have the opportunity to learn to read and write; but the general condition of education in the State is low; and they have but few common schools in the country parts. It was urged upon him to lead public opinion in favour of ameliorating their condition. He remarked that hundreds of slaveholders would be glad to be quit of the slaves altogether, if they knew how. We commended the paper to his serious perusal in his retired moments, and parted with friendly feelings.

We now retraced our course, travelling several hundred miles to Nashville, and we arrived on the last day of the year in the neighbourhood of our Friends settled in Eastern Tennessee, to whom my dear brother felt attracted in the love of the gospel.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

LAST VISIT TO AMERICA CONTINUED.

ILLNESS AND DEATH.

WILLIAM FORSTER was near the completio his seventieth year. The characteristics which distinguished his early days became, if poss still more conspicuous in the evening of his The higher he ascended in the attainment of tical holiness, the deeper he sank in humility self-abasedness, and the more simply he reste Christ alone, as the Rock of his Salvation. wider the range of his Christian dedication and fulness, the more ready he was to ascribe all to grace of God, by which he was what he was; the simple facts disclosed in the narrative of his fully show that "his grace was not bestowed u him in vain." Yet, like other men, he had his i mities, and it would be a great mistake to sup that there is any wish to represent his characte devoid of imperfections. Those who, by the ligh God's Spirit, have been led to form an adequate ception of human nature, as it *now* is, and who l themselves felt "the plague of their own hear the force of temptation and the power and subt of the Tempter, the consequent need of a Savi and the preciousness of Christ, as that Saviour, be the least likely to entertain such an idea. N

eulogy, indeed, should ever be absent from Christian biography. But if, in any instance, the facts of a man's life are such that to speak of them truthfully bears that appearance, it is a difficulty which cannot be avoided, and, certainly, one that ought not to be matter of regret. William Forster, himself, was so apt to dwell on the shady side of self-depreciation, that there is little danger, in speaking of him, of losing the balance of truth by abstaining from any attempt to add weight in that scale here. The object is not to exalt the man, but "the power of Christ that rested upon him."—2 Cor. xii. 9.

Brought up, as he was, from his earliest years, in connexion with the Society of Friends, and strongly attached to it and its distinctive views and practices throughout his whole subsequent course, it was natural that both his social and religious intercourse should be, in general, much confined to his fellow-members. But though, apart from his Christian labours at home and abroad, his personal intercourse with Christians of other denominations was somewhat limited, his acquaintance with their religious literature was by no means small. Both his mind and his heart were indeed truly catholic; and he could both see and rejoice in the tokens of vital religion to be found in others, and was remarkably exempt from all disposition to judge those who, in godly sincerity, pursued a different Christian path from his own.

In the Christian community with which he was immediately connected he had held a conspicuous place for nearly half a century; and not merely as a minister of the Gospel, but also as one who took an

active part in the church's internal affairs; for which latter service, his intimate acquaintance with the history, character, and usages of the body to which he belonged, together with his clear and sound understanding, and his gentle and affectionate spirit, peculiarly qualified him.

But, to use the words of one of his intimate friends, that for which he was most of all remarkable was unquestionably his gifts as a minister of Christ. By the common consent of his brethren these were regarded as of singular excellence. The chief and most remarkable characteristic of his ministry was, doubtless, the manifest depth of its source. The principle entertained by the Society of Friends, that every particular exercise of Christian ministry should arise out of a special impression of duty, and give evidence of a direct influence of the Holy Spirit, seemed to be especially realized in his case. It was evidently no slight or superficial exercise of soul, no equivocal unction from above, that prepared him for and constrained him to the exercise of his gift. And the character of the exercise itself naturally corresponded with the source from which it sprang; the fulness of the stream attesting the depth and richness of the fountain from which it flowed. A ministry having such a character and origin as this, would naturally find its most congenial sphere and the freest utterance on occasions when, by reason of the pervading presence and influence of the Holy Spirit in an assembly, there was a preparation to sympathize with and receive it. This idea was once strikingly expressed by another minister of eminent gifts and large spiritual capacity, who, speaking of an occasion when a more

than common sense of the Divine power and presence had been felt at the first gathering of a large assembly, remarked, that "the waters were deep enough for William Forster to swim in."

A scarcely less remarkable characteristic of his ministry than this of depth, though one which, from its very nature, was rather occasionally than habitually manifested, was the greatness of the subjects on which he often dwelt, and the vastness of the field which they embraced. By way of illustration, two of his sermons may be referred to which made a deep impression upon the minds of many. One was upon Ezekiel's vision of the waters; in expatiating on which, his large soul, evidently endued with power from on high, seemed able in some measure to grasp the mighty subject of the Gospel's past and future triumphs, in all its amplitude and blessedness; while he specially dwelt upon the glorious prediction, "And everything shall live whither the river cometh." The other was upon the vast theme of man's relation to his Almighty Creator; in which—first laying the broad foundation of his need of a Saviour in the depth of his own fallen and ruined state, and then rising to the glorious subject of his redemption and restoration by Christ—he ranged, as it were, over the whole field of divine truth, with a comprehensiveness and power that betokened both natural and spiritual gifts of no common kind. After giving such illustrations as these of the class of subjects on which he was wont to dwell, it is needless to say that his ministry was, in the most emphatic sense of the term, *evangelical;* "a ministry of reconciliation;" one in which "the gospel of the grace of

God" was fully and earnestly proclaimed; and of which the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and the sinner's justification through faith in his blood, were frequent and prominent topics.*

The power which a ministry having such characteristics as these could not fail to possess, was yet further increased by another for which it was scarcely less remarkable—that singular pathos, alike manifesting itself in the tones of his voice and in the matter and language of his addresses, which was the natural utterance of a heart in which love, and tenderness, and sympathy had so large a place.

It would seem to be almost impossible, in the nature of things, that one who was endowed with such gifts should be wholly unconscious of them. Yet so high was his standard of what Christian ministry ought to be, and so deep his personal humility, that he was far more tempted to disparage his labours in the Gospel, than to dwell upon them with feelings of complacency. Nor could anything be more remote from his character or practice than a disposition to put himself forward in the exercise of his gifts. On the contrary, he often seemed but too ready to give place to others. Eminently fitted, too, as he was, for service on great occasions and in large assemblies, no one could be much with him without seeing that

* It is interesting to have the testimony of a junior witness to the character of his ministry, on one occasion in 1842. "I certainly never did hear preaching," writes Ann Backhouse (afterwards Hodgkin), "that sounded to my ears more apostolic than his. The sinfulness of the human heart, and the preciousness of a Saviour—the unworthiness, the utter impotence of the creature—the majesty and power of the Creator, are themes on which he dwells in a way in which no one that I know does. But every one has his own gift."

his inclination led him far more to smaller and humbler spheres of labour.*

Though a certain kind of timidity was obviously one of the features of his character, yet, when he was engaged in his great Master's work, not only all thought about himself, but also all solicitude about the judgment of his hearers and consequently all fear of man, seemed for the time, to be banished from his mind; while all the powers of his soul were evidently concentrated on the one simple and sublime idea of following the guidance of that Divine Spirit under whose influence he regarded himself as speaking. That he did so regard himself cannot be questioned; yet no one could be more exempt than he was from all disposition to put forward his claims to such an influence, or from any tendency to cherish extravagant ideas respecting the measure in which it was vouchsafed either to himself or others.

It is almost superfluous to say of one whose character was so marked by modesty and humility, and so free from all tendency to egotism, that he was rarely heard to make any allusion to his own ministerial labours. Like the priests of old, who were permitted to wear their robes only when they ministered—an illustration once made use of by himself—he was ever ready to "lay aside his vestments,"

* An interesting illustration of this occurred on one occasion when he had been ministering on a First-day in two meetings (though apparently not with much liberty, as if he felt that he was in an uncongenial atmosphere), and it could not escape particular notice—how willingly he accepted the invitation of an elderly woman, in rather humble circumstances, with whom he had had some previous acquaintance, to spend the evening with her; and with what liberty and affection he poured out his soul, during a season of worship that followed the simple family meal, in addressing his aged hostess and a little adopted child, her only companion.

when the appointed service was accomplished. When his work was done, he seemed to have done with his work; he was wont, not to look back upon it, but to leave it. So single was his eye to the glory of God, that the more he had been clothed with the authority of the Gospel in his ministry, the less he seemed disposed to indulge "any secret bent to his own." Content to leave all to his blessing, he appeared anxious to divest himself of every idea of self-importance. Nor did he show more disposition to speak of the labours of others. The subject was evidently too sacred in his eyes to be lightly touched, either in the way of commendation or in that of censure; while the tenderness of his nature peculiarly indisposed him to the latter. It will be easily understood that the same cause led him to be specially indulgent towards the young and the inexperienced; to deprecate all rough handling and hasty discouragement in their treatment; and to desire that the reality of their gifts and calling should be judged of in a hopeful, rather than in a jealous and distrustful spirit. He was, nevertheless, earnestly concerned that all, who were really called to the work, might so exercise their gifts as to give "no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed." No one who heard him, when on one occasion, in the Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, he had largely dwelt upon the important duties of those who filled such positions in the church, would easily forget the impression left upon the meeting on his closing that remarkable communication nearly with these words:—"We do not want a superficial ministry. We do not want a flowery—or an eloquent ministry.

We want a sound, a living, and a baptizing ministry—we want a ministry that will break the hard heart and heal the wounded one—a ministry that will lead the soul to Christ, the living fountain, and leave it there!"

In noting the more prominent features of his character as a man, a Christian, and a minister of Christ, it is almost needless to add that in his demeanour and conduct, in the various relations of private life,—as a husband and father, a relation, friend, and master, he exhibited a beautiful example of Christian kindness, tenderness, consideration, and sympathy; and that his whole conversation—using the word in its larger meaning,—was marked by watchfulness, circumspection, and gravity, though without any gloominess or austerity. No one could associate much with him, or share his hospitality, without seeing how truly his personal and domestic habits, as well as the employment of his outward substance, corresponded with his character as a disciple and servant of Christ. He was not rich; but, in his manner of using what he had, not self-indulgence but the desire to serve his Master and to do good to his fellow-men, was the ruling principle of his conduct. What he was and did in relation to the poor and needy, the oppressed and down-trodden, has already sufficiently appeared in the record of his labours.*

It was justly remarked by one who watched him closely, that wherever he went he left his mark. He was a man to make an impression. His large and

* See the "Tribute to the memory of William Forster," by one who honoured and loved him.

somewhat unwieldy person was too conspicuous not to attract attention, while his whole manner evinced a strong desire to avoid it. It was curious to observe how he shunned notoriety, whilst, at the same time, he was pressing into it; how he longed for seclusion, whilst his sphere of duty was mostly one of publicity; labouring unseen where unseen labour would answer, but more often, "the observed of all observers," standing as Christ's ambassador before popular assemblies, or in the presence of princes, and great men, and rulers of the earth. There was about the whole man that peculiar expression which habitual communion with God imparts to the human countenance. You saw—you could not but see—that he was a man dedicated, set apart for the service of God.

In pursuance of his present mission, he had, in company with his faithful fellow-labourers, traversed some of the Free States of the American Union, and most of the Southern Slave States; and, as has been seen, they had obtained interviews with the Governors of each in succession.* Their work, as it respected the South, was nearly brought to a conclusion, and William Forster felt himself at liberty to enter upon the more exculsively religious part of his engagement amongst the little company of Friends in Tennessee, for whom he had long cherished a deep Christian interest. He had visited them many years

* Not less interesting than noteworthy as it must appear to a thoughtful observer, that a small Christian community, like the Society of Friends, should feel itself impelled, by a conviction of religious duty, to engage in such a movement as the adoption and circulation of the Address on Slavery and the Slave Trade, and that it should find amongst its members, men who freely offered themselves to undertake to carry out its concern, both in Europe and America, it cannot but be cause for thankfulness that in both the Old and the New World, and even in the

before, during his first long sojourn in America in 1820-1825; and being now again brought to associate with them, his heart was largely opened towards them in the love of Christ.

On First-day morning, the 1st of the First Month, 1854, he and his companions attended a meeting in a small building in the woods at Hickory Valley. He "preached the gospel to those present with much power, dwelling upon the value of religious exercise, the continual need of watchfulness unto prayer, and exalting that grace and truth which come through Jesus Christ—truly not of ourselves, but the free gift of God, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He invited all in much Christian feeling, and tenderness, and love, to come and partake thereof."

His brother, Josiah Forster, remarks respecting him, under date of First Month 2nd :—

I often admire the energy and diligence of my dear brother. How frequently he finds the way to the hearts of the young men as we pass along, and gives them good counsel, adapted to their dangers and temptations, dissuading from strong drink, &c. He manages to make himself agreeable to the

Slave States of the American Union, the motive, at least, should be so fully appreciated, whilst on many occasions the importance also of the attempt was not less recognized. A pleasing instance of this is afforded by the following letter addressed to the deputation, by an American statesman whose name stands deservedly high in both countries :

"Senate Chamber, *March 23rd, 1854.*

"GENTLEMEN,—The time I had the good fortune to be with you in Washington seemed very short, and I am now filled with regret that we have parted not to meet again. Your visit to my country inspires my reverence. It was a beautiful conception, and it has been conducted in a spirit equally beautiful.

"Among the grateful hearts you leave behind, I hope you will not forget

"Your sincere friend,

"CHARLES SUMNER."

coloured men, the slaves of the house, who readily wait upon him at taverns; he learns their history. He talks to the tavern keepers, who are very civil to him, trying to prevail with them not to bring up their sons to the evils of a drinking-house. A young man, after listening to him in some private talk at Nashville at the tavern, said he wished he would talk to another, a very wicked lad; this youth also came in, and listened patiently to some counsel. He has found several opportunities as we came along to distribute copies of the "Lock and Key," as well as to give away New Testaments.

On Second-day morning the 2nd, they had an appointed meeting at Friendsville, of which Josiah Forster says:—

It was a large full meeting this morning at Friendsville; I think not less than 120 present; it may be spoken of as a a favoured time. My brother's ministry was greatly to my satisfaction; and evidently, as I thought, under divine influence—on the universality of the love of God in Christ Jesus, and the offers of salvation to all, encouraging some, in the belief that they had already yielded their hearts to the power of true religion; and pleading, in much love, and earnestness, and tenderness, with others who had neglected their best interests—commending true, experimental godliness, dwelling upon our utter helplessness without divine aid, and testifying to that redemption which is in Christ.

From other reports it appears to have been a "very memorable opportunity." One of his audience testifies:—

In his vivid description of the life of a dedicated Christian, it seemed as if he might have been involuntarily drawing a picture of himself—first, beautifully setting forth the fruits of early dedication, the blest results arising from a full surrender of the whole man, body, soul and spirit, to the tendering, sanctifying power of divine grace, in the very morning of the

day, before the heart is seared and hardened by the cares of the world or the love of other things—tracing the course of such, from one degree of religious attainment to another, gradually mellowing under the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness, till, finally, the ripe fruit is brought to perfection. In describing the winding up of the earthly course of the perfect man in Christ Jesus, and the crown of glory which awaited him, it seemed (continues our witness) as if he almost opened heaven before us, and a little glimpse was given of those blessed realities, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, but which God hath laid up in store for all those who love and serve Him.

When the meeting closed, he walked round the graveyard, and spoke of the pleasantness of its location, little thinking then, it may be, how soon he was himself to be laid there.

The next day, about noon, they proceeded on their journey towards another settlement of Friends, and J. F. continues:—

1st mo. 3rd.—After reading the tenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, my brother expressed, with much feeling, words of encouragement to the elder branches of the family; quoting the words of the prophet—"The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee;"—and addressing others who were present in a feeling of interest for their souls.

We had a beautiful afternoon for our ride, and were, I think, four hours on the way; crossing the ferry over the Holston river. After which we walked up to the ferry-house, kept by Samuel Low. My dear brother and I stood in the verandah on our arriving at this farm-house, and watched the beautiful sun set over the calm, silvery waters of the stream;

admiring the whole prospect—the woods, the distant mountains in the south-east, and the cleared fields. We were now in about thirty-six degrees of north latitude. We enjoyed our quarters—a warm house, a respectable, serious owner, connected with the Cumberland Presbyterians.

During the night William Forster had some symptoms of indisposition. These were not, however, of a character either to alarm himself, or to excite much uneasiness on the part of his kind companions; yet now, after all his long and arduous exertions, began the illness which terminated his life, and liberated the immortal spirit, "willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." The following particulars of the affecting events of succeeding days are chiefly taken from the memoranda of his brother:—

1st mo. 4th.—Although my dear brother had suffered much pain in the night, soon after breakfast we left for Knoxville, about twelve miles distant; but in a very short time he felt so much pain in the side, and sickness, that we concluded to return and rest for a few hours. The illness continued, and we became increasingly anxious. Our landlord went in pursuit of a doctor. The best medical advice of the country was obtained; the pain continued; but there was little ability to take nourishment.

On Seventh-day, the 7th, my dear brother remarked to me that he should have been glad to be with his wife and children, adding, "But to depart and be with Christ is better. I have two or three times in my life seemed to be near the valley of the shadow of death, but never so near as this time." In the course of the day he said, "I had thought this morning I could have dictated a few lines to the planters of Virginia and others of the Southern States, but I cannot do it now."

8th.—My brother was remarking upon the ramifications of the cotton trade in the slave States. How millions of the

civilized world are dependent more or less on the slavery of the South, as regards the growth of cotton—the trade in it—the shipping employed—the manufacture of it; and then the uses. But how very, very, very few lift up their voices against it as inhuman and unjust. The employment of women under a burning sun to labour in the field, when they ought to be attending to their families at home, is contrary to the order of Divine Providence.

About the 10th the dear invalid appeared a little revived, and dictated a letter to his beloved wife, in which he says:—

This is a very solemn chastening; I am brought very low, never so low before. My iliness is attended with personal humiliations which are hard to bear. I often suffer a great deal both of acute and obtuse pain. I do not say much about myself, there is very little to say; but I do not murmur, and now and then catch hold of something which comforts, especially when I can think of the Saviour as I would wish to do.

After inserting some warm messages of love to his friends, he adds:—

Of course you will be sure that William and Jane should hear all that is to be heard about me, if it can be so. Dearest child, I know how tender he would have been; but I do not know that I could have wished him to witness my sufferings and my weakness. There may be wisdom in it; and to thee, my dearest; I do not know that thou couldst have borne it. It would be hard to thee to see how almost totally devoid I am of bodily power. My very tender love to dearest Jane.

And now, farewell to you all around. The Lord bless thee, my dearest, and support and give thee quietness and hope for the sake of his dear Son, our Saviour. My very dear love to my brother Robert, and each of my sisters.

The next day J. F. resumes :—

1st mo. 11th.—In the course of the day, my dear brotl said to me, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable merc are words which I used to think of as of low attainmer but I think differently now. It has never been with me say much of myself. If I may but be favoured to live t few remaining days to the honour of Christ. The grace our Lord Jesus Christ are words which comprehend all I wi for.

During the next few days the beloved patie showed symptoms of considerable improvement, an at intervals even dictated a long letter to his frien Barnabas C. Hobbs, at the Bloomfield Schoo Indiana, evincing a lively interest in that Institutior and going into minute particulars regarding it management, and the welfare of the pupils, beside alluding to subjects of a more general characte The following extract indicates its pervading spirit :—

When I was at St. Louis a few weeks ago, I had the oppor tunity of printing an edition of the little manual which introduced to thy notice under the title of "The Lock and Key," and have already disposed of the edition to a considerabl extent. I have written to our friend Elijah Coffin, requestin him to print an edition sufficiently large to supply the First day schools of Friends of that Yearly Meeting; and I shoul be glad to get it introduced in other schools of Friends, wher it might be hoped it would be made use of with seriousnes and sound judgment. I requested E. C. to correspond with thee, and to send thee as large a supply as thou couldst appro priate to any good purpose. It would be an encouragement to me to find that thou art free to take any part in the object as I am increasingly of the mind that we ought all of us, in this wide-spreading and free-thinking generation, to be doing what we can in instilling in the minds of our young people a

belief in the Divine authority of the books of the Old and New Testament; and to show them to what degree they belong one to the other; and how, in the good providence of the Most High, they are transmitted to us as a testimony unto Christ.

I am in a state of much bodily suffering, and therefore employ the hand of another, and the little that remains for me to say must be in few words, perhaps almost too laconic to make myself fully understood.

A few days later Josiah Forster's memoranda continue:—

15th.—We read the 25th Psalm this morning. At the close my brother uttered a few words in prayer, acknowledging to his being brought very low—that the billows had passed over him; and asking for a patient, submissive, obedient mind.

19th.—Our hopes and fears alternately prevailed through the last week, and so it was for many days this week. At one time my brother went so far as to speak of our getting to friends of Lost Creek meeting, forty miles off. His true and faithful friend W. H. came to tell me that my brother was feeling a little return of internal strength, and proposed an attempt to go to Knoxville. It seemed very unlikely; but, as it originated with himself, we were willing to make the attempt.

W. Holmes went over to Knoxville to make the needful arrangements. He engaged suitable apartments, and procured carriages to fetch them. In the meantime John Candler and J. F. continued their unremitting attentions to the dear sufferer. The former writes on the 18th respecting him:—

I have watched by the bed seven hours; there is apparently less suffering than there had been, but he acknowledges that it is "hard work,—the breathing is oppressive." On reading in "Pilgrim's Progress" of Christian's beginning to sink, and

Hopeful calling out to him, "Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom, and it is good;" he raised his hands with a sweet joyous smile, saying, "Read that again."

His patience, resignation, and tranquillity, are striking. The many privations and discomforts, so hard to his nature, were met with much sweetness and submission; and he remarked that he did not think he had a murmuring thought.

Josiah Forster resumes his memoranda:—

1st. mo. 20th.—The wind was blowing from the south-west; the thermometer at 64; the air soft, the sun shining at intervals with fleecy clouds. My dear brother still willing to go, having had some hours' sleep in the night. Our clothes generally packed up; and we looking for the carriages which had been ordered; but they did not arrive. They had come to the edge of the creek a few miles off; but the waters were so high that they could not cross at the ford, and they were obliged to return.

In the course of the following day there was a return of fever. He asked at one time to hear a few verses of one of the latter chapters of the prophecies of Isaiah. I read seven in the sixtieth chapter. On the following morning, two or three hymns were read to him, the last on the praises of the Redeemer: he spoke with much sweetness and humility, saying that all he hoped for was, that he might be just admitted within the gates of the city, and that if there was one seat lower than another he might be on it, trusting that all that was against him would be blotted out of the book of remembrance.

We afterwards had some conversation on the slavery question, when he expressed his clear desire that all may be treated with gentleness and mildness, not in irritating and reproachful language.

24th.—We were yesterday reading a few verses in the 2nd chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, when my dear brother expressed with much feeling his sense of "the

preciousness of Christ's pleading for us—of knowing Him for our Intercessor. How comprehensive are the words 'I know that Thou hearest me always'!"

Within the last two or three days we have read with much interest the account of Elizabeth Fry's early religious experience, from about the year 1806 and onwards. My brother was much pleased with it. We were speaking of her first visit to Newgate; and I asked him about it. Stephen Grellet and he were visiting the prisoners at Newgate, not particularly those under sentence of death: they went one forenoon to see the women; they were not ready. My brother thought they were resting on the boards, being convicts about to be transported. He remembers the sight of them, in a long row, wretchedly clothed; but their children much worse. On their return into the city in the course of the day, they saw E. F. at Mildred's-court, and told her of the condition of the poor children. She went the next day with Anna Buxton (W. F.'s wife), and took articles of clothing for the children, &c. This was the first visit Elizabeth Fry made to Newgate.*

27th.—My beloved brother evidently became weaker in the course of the last two days; though yesterday he lay quiet, not seeming very conscious; but, I hope, not suffering much pain. In the course of the night the breathing gradually became shorter; it was evident the solemn close was approaching. About four this morning he quietly expired,—I trust it may be reverently said, breathing out his soul unto God.

In the morning they left for Friendsville, in two boats—the remains, with the landlord of the ferry-house, in one, and Josiah Forster and William Holmes in the other—John Candler having gone before to make the needful arrangements for the funeral. The river was much swollen by the recent

* See vol. i., p. 141. Also Memoirs of Stephen Grellett, vol. chap. xviii.

rains, and the current so strong that the passage not effected without much difficulty. At length t were permitted to land safely in the field of a plan overflowed by the rushing waters. Here they v met by several friends on horseback; and a wag and carriage were waiting to take them forw Slowly they wended their way through forests, bru wood, and rocky roads, eight miles to the house Ephraim Lee, where William Forster had b kindly entertained only a month before. The n day Josiah Forster remarks :—

On First-day morning we followed the remains of precious brother to the burial-ground adjoining the Meeti house: we stood some time in silence around the grave. A the remains had been deposited, the desire was expres that, through the mercy which is in Christ Jesus, this sole and instructive event might be blessed to every one of us. then withdrew to the Meeting-house, which was filled. Jo Candler spoke on the text, "Whose faith follow, consideri the end of their conversation; Jesus Christ, the same yest day, to-day, and for ever." David Morgan said a few wor and, towards the close of the meeting, J. C. offered up prayer for the near relatives, the friends, and the compa assembled. We afterwards dined at the house of our ki friend Ephraim Lee. He and the other friends have a stro sense of the value of the Gospel labours of my dear broth at their meeting, which is now remembered with deep in rest as the very last he ever attended.

Thus, on an errand full of love, in the service his Lord, died William Forster as he had lived, n less the ambassador for Christ—the Prince of Pea —than the advocate of universal freedom for t whole human race. Had the pleadings of Christi

love been then allowed to prevail, what an amount of sin and suffering might have been averted; how peaceably and how safely might that have been attained, which is now being accomplished through the dreadful alternative of "the battle of the warrior with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood;" yet in a manner not less certainly proclaiming the great fact that, amidst all the ebbings and flowings of human affairs, "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; the Lord sitteth King for ever!"

Truly might it be said, in the language of William Forster's son, "It is impossible not to feel that he was allowed to fall a martyr to his devotion to that great and holy cause of the abolition of negro slavery, in the earnest and untiring advocacy of which so large a portion of his life had, from time to time, been spent." But, "for him to live was Christ," and "for him to die was gain." And one such life, taken in its totality—not free from human infirmities of flesh and of spirit, but "caused to triumph" over them "in Christ"—affords a practical illustration of the nature and value of the simple Christianity of the New Testament, which it would be no mark of wisdom to disregard. In its motives and in its actions, in its principles and in its practice, in its faith and in its works, as well as in its substantial enjoyments in this world, and its well-founded anticipations of eternal blessedness in that which is to come, a healthy understanding—freed from the bondage of an "evil heart of unbelief," and wide awake from the dreams of scepticism—can hardly fail to recognize a beautiful reflex of "the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of

God." When one, "so found in Christ," lays
the garment of mortality, it is not easy to thi
him without joy, as included in the Saviour's
cessory word: "Father, I will that they also
thou hast given me, be where I am; that they
behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for
lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

ADDENDA.

THE graveyard near the Friends' Meeting-house at Friendsville, Blount County, Tennessee, is a bright, sunny spot, surrounded by trees, rural and picturesque, gently sloping to the south. A simple stone marks the place where rest the remains of William Forster. The day after the funeral the devoted brother, Josiah Forster, and his faithful companions John Candler and William Holmes, took leave of their kind Tennessee friends, and left the scene of their late bereavement, to complete the object of their mission.*

They proceeded to North Carolina, and had an interview, at Raleigh, with David S. Reid, the

* It was a touching instance of Christian friendship when, on arriving at Loudon the same evening, they met Dr. Joseph W. Taylor, from Burlington, N. J., whom William Forster had expressed a wish to have beside him should he be ill. On hearing of his attack he had hastened to join him, travelling day and night more than 1,300 miles, till he reached Loudon. He had there taken his place in the coach, and gone down to the river side to be ferried over, but the waters were too high to allow either the mails or the passengers to cross; and he had just got back to the hotel, after this fruitless attempt to proceed on his journey, when—ignorant of what had taken place—he met the three remaining friends, the one, on whose account he had travelled so far, being already beyond the reach and the need of the kind offices of love he had come to render. He now accompanied the deputation on their journey to the north.

Governor of that State. They afterwards visited
only two remaining smaller Slave States of Maryl
and Delaware, and extended their journey to nea
all the Northern Free States not before visited. Th
obtained ready access to the respective governo
and had an interesting conference with each; besid
taking great pains to promote a wide circulation
the address on slavery among persons of influen
and the inhabitants more generally. They paid
second visit to Washington, and had a parti
interview with the President,* as well as with son
of the heads of departments, and the leading mer
bers of both houses of Congress. After the accor
plishment of these services the deputation embark
at New York, on their homeward voyage, and we
favoured to land safely at Liverpool, near the end
the Fourth Month.

The ensuing Yearly Meeting in London, c
receiving and recording the report of their pr
ceedings, making allusion to the decease of or
of their number, entered on its books the followir
minute:—

"The deputation appointed at our last Year
Meeting to present the Address on the Slave-trad
and Slavery to the President of the United State
and others in that land, have produced a repor
which has been now read.

* It was not till after their return from Tennessee that the survivi
members of the deputation were told, that during their former stay
two days at Washington, their late colleague, William Forster, h
unknown to them, "sought and obtained an interview with the Preside
and his wife, alone and unattended; and that his manner and coun
made a deep impression on their minds." And to this was attribut
the expressed wish to see the deputation again, before their departure
England.

This report has been deeply interesting to us, and has afresh awakened our lively sympathy for that large number of our fellow-creatures still held in the unrighteous bonds of slavery; as well as our concern for those who, as holders of slaves, are exposed to the fearful and debasing influence of this iniquitous system.

The faithful and judicious services of our beloved friends in this arduous engagement have been truly satisfactory to this meeting.

We deeply mourn the loss sustained by the church in the death of one of the deputation, whilst engaged in this service—our friend William Forster, honoured and beloved in the Lord; yet we desire to bow in resignation to the Divine will.

We feel further engaged to record our grateful sense of the assistance which, we reverently believe, has been granted of the Lord throughout the prosecution of this extensive labour of love."

In thus again adverting to the event which had taken place on the banks of the Holston, in Tennessee, it is not meant, as it regards the nearest connexions, who still survive, to draw aside the curtain that hides the family scenes which could not fail to follow its announcement at Earlham-road and elsewhere. Yet, of Anna Forster, who was herself removed in little more than sixteen months afterwards, it may not be unsuitable to say that the heavy tidings were not permitted to overwhelm her. One sister was with her at this time; and her son and daughter, who were at Northrepps, reached her in a few hours, to her great comfort. Her blessed Lord,

whose unchanging faithfulness and love she had so often proved before, was near to uphold and to strengthen her. Deeply as she felt the affliction, her Christian character shone out brightly under it. "I mourn," she said, "but I do not murmur;" and she could rejoice, even in the midst of her sorrow, because of the sense that was granted her of the glory of the inheritance, which, she thankfully believed, had been graciously bestowed, for Christ's sake, upon the beloved companion of so many years. And she was sustained in cheerful resignation to the divine will, till, at the age of seventy, she also was permitted, through the same Saviour's grace, to inherit the blessing to the pure in heart, who "shall see God."

No one, aware of the circumstances, would be surprised that, far beyond the circle of his immediate family and connexions, the death of William Forster should have caused an extraordinary sensation, both in America and England. It was dwelt upon with much interest and feeling in various papers and periodicals of the time in both countries; and an extended appreciative notice of the event, and the character of William Forster, appeared soon afterwards in two successive numbers of the *Norfolk News*, from the pen of one of his much valued friends and associates in philanthropic labours, the late John Alexander, of Norwich. Besides the usual testimony issued on behalf of his own Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, in token of their love and esteem, an interesting document of a similar kind was prepared and adopted by the Monthly Meeting of the Friends in Tennessee, among whom he ended his Christian labours, and finished his earthly course.

The following lines by Anna Gurney, selected from other private communications in verse and prose, may not be uninteresting to the reader, as characteristic both of the writer and of the subject of her delineation :—

JEREMIAH XVII.

He "hasted not" the cross to take
The woful day to meet;
Yet when the voice distinctly spake
Ne'er paused his willing feet.

His heart was human, well content
To hold his even way;
Yet, called by that still voice, he went,
Nor thought to disobey.

He knew the tie we must not touch,
In light and shallow rhyme;
He loved, he prized e'en overmuch,
Friends tried by toil and time.

And oh! how loved and honoured he
Of England's hearths and hearts,
Sighed men of lofty, low degree,
Our friend, our father parts.

He knew of filial love the cheer,
His age's staff and stay;
But all he counted not as dear
When spake the word, "Away."

One gift was given. The arm that he
In loving boyhood pressed—
That brother's arm endured to be
His firm, his latest rest.

He sought not glory, but he found
A glorious death at last;
When on the slaver's blighted ground
He sank beneath the blast.

He sought not—he—the martyr's crown,
But God the boon bestowed;
When meet to die, he laid him down
Where wild the torrents flowed.

That stream that imaged forth the tide,
Where Hopeful's feet had stood;
He caught the word, the depth he tried,
And owned the bottom good.

And he shall come again with those
Who triumph in the day,
That Christ shall break his saints' repose,
And lead their blissful way.

When the Deliverer shall appear,
And, freed from grief and care,
They who with Him have suffered here
His joy may fearless share.

A. G.

March, 1854.

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